the weekly
Standard

MAY 12, 1997 $2.95

There is a bipartisan plan to balance the federal budget by the year 2002. It's a bad idea.

NO DEAL

Stephen Moore
Robert Kagan
The Editors

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A leap of faith. A jump for joy.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. American Ballet Theatre. The Joffrey Ballet. Mark Morris Dance Company. Parsons Dance Company. Pilobolus. All touring nationally this year, these are just a few of the hundreds of dance companies bringing innovative works and new ideas to audiences across the country and around the world. In the past quarter of a century, dance in America has soared with an amazing spirit — from regional troupes just beginning to stretch their wings, to the most accomplished national companies expanding the boundaries of the art form.

The Philip Morris family of companies celebrates this innovative spirit as we mark our 25th anniversary of support for dance in America. It's just a part of our ongoing commitment to visionary individuals and pioneering organizations who enhance the quality of our world.

Supporting the spirit of innovation.

PHILIP MORRIS COMPANIES INC.

KRAFT FOODS, INC. KRAFT FOODS INTERNATIONAL, INC. MILLER BREWING COMPANY

PHILIP MORRIS INTERNATIONAL INC. PHILIP MORRIS U.S.A.

PHILIP MORRIS COMP

PM

PHILIP MORR

© 1997 Philip Morris Management Corp. Photos: *Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater*, photo by Richard Corman; below: *American Ballet Theatre*, photo by Roy Round.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 34 • MAY 12, 1997

2 SCRAPBOOK

4 CASUAL
Andrew Ferguson remembers a curmudgeonly icon.

6 CORRESPONDENCE

9 EDITORIAL
No Deal—with a dissent from Fred Barnes

11 WHY MAKE A DEAL?
Neither GOP nor country needs it. *by* **Stephen Moore**

14 DON'T CUT DEFENSE
American forces can take no more. *by* **Robert Kagan**

16 PARTY AN
The Vietnam spy as *Time* correspondent. *by* **Roger Kimball**

18 MAPLE LEAF RAGGED
Right-leaning Canada votes left. *by* **David Frum**

40 PARODY
Justice for John Henry

20 THEY DID IT FOR THE CHILDREN
What the Volunteerism Summit was all about. *by* **Matt Labash**

24 FREE SPEECH AND THE NET
The Decency Act is a mess, but the court should uphold it. *by* **David Gelernter**

26 HEARINGS IMPAIRED
A week on Capitol Hill. *by* **David Brooks**

Books & Arts

31 I LOST IT AT THE ART HOUSE — A moviegoer's diary. *by* **John Podhoretz**

33 CHE GUEVARA REMEMBERED — The life of a glamorous, gruesome guerrilla. *by* **Stephen Schwartz**

35 ENOUGH EXCUSES — Walter Olson gives the Right a rallying cry. *by* **Roger Clegg**

36 MODERNIST SNOB — Ada Louise Huxtable lets America have it. *by* **Steven Lagerfeld**

38 MURRAY PERAHIA OVERHEATS — A pianist's disappointing return to the stage. *by* **Jay Nordlinger**

William Kristol, *Editor and Publisher* **Fred Barnes**, *Executive Editor* **John Podhoretz**, *Deputy Editor*
David Tell, *Opinion Editor* **David Brooks, Andrew Ferguson**, *Senior Editors* **Richard Starr, Claudia Winkler**, *Managing Editors*
Christopher Caldwell, *Senior Writer* **Jay Nordlinger**, *Associate Editor*
Tucker Carlson, Matt Labash, Matthew Rees, *Staff Writers*
Kent Bain, *Art Director* **Jacqueline Goldberg**, *Assistant Art Director* **Pia Catton**, *Reporter*
J. Bottum, John J. DiIulio, Jr., Joseph Epstein, David Frum, David Gelernter, Brit Hume, Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, P. J. O'Rourke, *Contributing Editors*
Jennifer L. Felten, *Business Manager* **Francine M. McMahon**, *Advertising Director*
Dianne S. Mace, *Subscription Director* **Polly Coreth, Doris Ridley, Carolyn Wimmer**, *Executive Assistants* **Victorino Matus**, *Research Associate*
Alison Maresco, *Account Executive* **Jonathan V. Last, Kimberly Mackey**, *Staff Assistants* **Josephine DeLorenzo**, *Publicity*

The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly, except for the first week of January and the first week of September, by News America Publishing Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY, 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Send subscription orders to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153. Yearly subscriptions, $79.96; Canadian, $99.96; foreign postage extra. Cover price, $2.95 ($3.50 Canadian). Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage and handling). Subscribers: Please send all remittances, address changes, and subscription inquiries to: The Weekly Standard, Customer Service, P.O. Box 710, Radnor, PA 19088-0710. If possible include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. For subscription customer service, call 1-800-983-7600. Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The Weekly Standard Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is (202) 293-4900. Advertising Production: call Natalie Harwood, (610) 293-8540. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 930, Radnor, PA 19088-0930. Copyright 1996, News America Publishing Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in The Weekly Standard may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. The Weekly Standard is a trademark of News America Publishing Incorporated.

The Audit Bureau Member

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

China Syndrome

In the propaganda of the U.S.-China Business Council, American companies making deals with Beijing are front-line soldiers of freedom—educating the Chinese on modern market practices and the rule of law that undergirds them.

Back on planet Earth, where actual deals—not fantasies—get written, things are a little different. Take the U.S. online computer company Prodigy, for example.

Prodigy has a new Internet service agreement with the Chinese. It'll be called Shanghai Prodigy Telecommunications, and it'll offer Chinese subscribers online shopping and price quotes from the Shanghai stock exchange. Well, actually, current Prodigy employees won't be offering Chinese subscribers anything. All technical elements of the new service will be controlled by the staff of Norinco, China's largest state-owned arms manufacturer, which is Prodigy's partner in the deal.

Norinco has very particular ideas about what stuff is appropriate for Chinese people to read on their computer terminals. And Prodigy chairman Greg Carr is eager to accommodate those ideas. "All the stuff will be screened," he says. "We want to be good citizens, we don't want the government to come round and spank us." So they plan to "block as much as we have to to keep our friends happy."

Isn't that *nice*, everybody getting along like this?

Sure, we could get along even better, like the French do. And the Boeing Company, leader of Washington's pro-China business lobby, wishes we would. Boeing is bitterly unhappy that the United States last month half-heartedly sponsored a U.N. resolution in Geneva condemning Chinese human rights practices. Boeing sells airplanes to Beijing. So does Airbus Industrie of France, which voted against the resolution. Don't our diplomats understand how the world works? fume Boeing officials.

In the *New York Times* last week, Boeing vice president Larry Dickenson made this prediction: When French president Jacques Chirac "arrives in Beijing in a few weeks, I am sure that he will be rewarded" for France's solidarity with China in Geneva. Hang human rights, in other words; Boeing's trying to move some product.

And we're trying to run a pro-capitalist magazine. These guys are making it awfully difficult.

Ingrahamania

Sometime *McLaughlin Group* panelist and CBS and MSNBC commentator Laura Ingraham continues to mesmerize the chattering class. First came that nasty hit-piece profile in *Vanity Fair*. Next came the White House Correspondents Association dinner, where nearby guests were left agog as Ingraham stole the momentarily empty chair of pundit John McLaughlin's fiancée—the better to chat up actor Robert De Niro. After that came an item—planted by Ingraham herself—in the *Washington Post* gossip column, "The Reliable Source." Seems Ingraham and De Niro hooked up (casually) the day after the correspondents dinner and flew to New York on his private jet.

Now, by fax-machine *samizdat* around Washington, comes press criticism by one Mas'ud Zavarzadeh in *Political Affairs*. Laura Ingraham, according to Zavarzadeh, is a "young, smart, image-savvy" political analyst "who can cut against the nationalist conservative clichés of Brinkley-Will-Novak." She is "the new postmodern political commentator for the post-Cold War." She is also "the voice of transnational postmodern fascism," of course. But hey, nobody's perfect. *Political Affairs*, incidentally, is the bimonthly "theoretical journal" of the Communist Party USA.

Fake Tocqueville Lives!

Hillary Clinton, in a speech at last week's Philadelphia "summit" on voluntarism, explicitly invoked Alexis de Tocqueville in support of the event's spirit of bossy do-goodism. That peerlessly perceptive admirer of America was highly suspicious of even well-intentioned government involvement in civil life. He would've hated the summit.

But Mrs. Clinton wasn't the only one to misuse Tocqueville in connection with the event. In a signed piece about the summit in the April 27 issue of *Parade*, chairman Colin Powell quoted Tocqueville, to this effect: "America is great because she is good. If America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great." Sigh. As our

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

contributor John J. Pitney, Jr., of Claremont McKenna College has pointed out—more than once—this famous "Tocqueville" quote is bogus.

Great Moments in Affirmative Action

Here is a verbatim description from a vacancy announcement at the Library of Congress soliciting applications for the position of Specialist in Social and Information Sciences and Coordinator of Review (Social Science Research Coordinator): "The Library of Congress is an equal opportunity employer. Women, minorities, and persons with who meet eligibility requirements are strongly encouraged to apply."

What's wrong with this sentence (besides the moral offensiveness of the government favoritism that everyone now takes for granted)? Was *disabilities* inadvertently dropped? Does semantic up-to-dateness now decree that persons with disabilities no longer be identified by any epithet at all, but referred to reverently as "persons with—"? Or maybe the *with* was inadvertently inserted? But that would imply that women and minorities fall into a different category from persons who meet eligibility requirements.

As always in the avant-garde precincts of human-resources-speak, the interpretive possibilities are diverse, and should be embraced in all their diversity.

Audit the NEA

For all that the National Endowment for the Arts has made headlines over the last decade with its grants underwriting pornographic photos and scatological "performance art," the agency has been astonishingly under-supervised by Congress. At a briefing on the NEA earlier this month, staff of the House education committee's oversight subcommittee pointed out that during the NEA's 32-year history, its administrative practices have undergone a thorough oversight investigation only once, in 1979. And that was by the NEA's best congressional friend, Democrat Sidney Yates of Illinois, who downplayed the (highly critical) report, saying, "It isn't what I intended."

Since then, despite griping and threats from the NEA's conservative congressional opponents, no one has been looking at the books. That's too bad, considering the suggestive reports from the NEA's own inspector general. In its semi-annual report to the Congress, the inspector general showed that between 1991 and 1996, 79 percent of the NEA's grant recipients did not record their costs adequately, and 63 percent could not reconcile their costs with their accounting records. And ignoring guidelines set by OMB, 53 percent of the grantees failed to have independent auditors check their books. Gee. If the NEA can't keep better track of the $99 million or so it gets from taxpayers now, maybe it should be getting less money. A lot less.

Help Wanted

The Weekly Standard has a position available for a circulation manager, who will report to the circulation director. Candidates must have several years' experience in circulation planning, budgeting, subscription fulfillment, ABC regs, source management, and direct marketing. Please send your resumé to: Business Manager, The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th Street, NW, Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036. Or fax us at (202) 293-4901.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Casual

S.O.B., R.I.P.

Of the many reminiscences that have poured out since the death of Mike Royko last Tuesday, my favorite came from one of his fellow columnists, Rheta Grimsley Johnson of the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. Royko was a hero to Johnson, as he was to many people who grind out copy for a living, and she finally laid eyes on him during a Democratic National Convention a few years ago. He was sitting alone in a hotel coffee shop. She couldn't quite bring herself to walk up and speak to the great man, and she wrote a column about it.

But before I go on with Johnson's story, I would like to interject one of my own. (Johnson's story is better than mine, and one thing you learned reading Royko was to save your best stuff for the kicker.) Royko was my hero, too. I grew up reading him in the *Chicago Daily News* (d. 1978). He brought news from a world that was only dimly imaginable from the outer suburbs of the city—the now much-mourned world of ethnic neighborhoods and two-flats and corner taverns, where everybody smoked and worked with his hands and didn't take no guff. I don't know whether that world ever existed in the romantic version recollected these days by its survivors, but Royko made it vividly real, and very funny, and sometimes, but not too often, poignant.

Even when he wasn't writing about those neighborhoods they lurked in his columns somewhere—he wrote from them, I mean, even when he didn't write about them. Like all newspaper columnists with too much space to fill, he could summon various emotions at will for the purposes of that day's column: high dudgeon on Monday, weepy sentimentality on Tuesday, ironic detachment for the middle of the week, and so on. Unlike his colleagues, though, he almost never struck a false note. The gift of his invention seemed bottomless. It dazzled me as a boy, and never stopped dazzling me.

When I was in my twenties and had moved to the city, I started hanging out at the Billy Goat Tavern below Michigan Avenue, fabled already in the early '80s as the quintessential "shot-and-beer" joint. Yuppies liked the Billy Goat. We could breathe in the fumes of ethnic-neighborhood Chicago without venturing out to an actual ethnic neighborhood, which might have been yucky. We probably ruined the bar as a result. Wizened Chicagoans say the Billy Goat is no longer the "real Chicago": It's too self-conscious, its grime and gruffness almost self-parodic. But—alas—the fakery is what makes it, in 1997, the "real Chicago."

One night I brought in a friend visiting from California, a very pretty woman. At the corner of the bar sat Royko, alone, hunched over the paper. I had never seen him in person before. One hand held a Pall Mall, the other a plastic cup of (I think) Old Style. This was too good to be true—my friend was going to get a taste of the real city!

I ordered a glass of white wine for her and, though I shudder to think of it now, a shot and a beer for myself. I screwed up my courage. "Hi, Mr. Royko," I finally said. "Great column today!" My voice was very high.

Even now, 15 years later, I can't think of the look he gave me without feeling slightly sick. It wasn't a sneer. It wasn't condescension. But there was profound revulsion in it, I can tell you that. He hunched over his paper again.

After a half-hour or so, I got up to go to the bathroom. When I came out a few minutes later, Royko was sitting on my barstool. Now he was hunched over my friend, whispering. When he saw me he gave me that look again. Slowly, very slowly, he stood up, winked at her, and climbed the stairs out of the bar.

I didn't say anything, nor did my friend, but at last, after several interminable minutes, she giggled. "He said you were a dork," she said.

He was probably an S.O.B. But he was the greatest journalist of his time, and being an S.O.B had something to do with it. In his last years he refused to bend to the pressures that closed in on him—the pressures of political correctness, in current shorthand—the same pressures that have crippled journalism elsewhere. Liberals always loved him for championing the "little guy." But nowadays the little guy is just as likely to be a white middle-aged small-businessman harassed by OSHA or the EEOC, or otherwise bedeviled by do-gooders and busybodies. He championed the little guy to the end. He was right to say that he hadn't changed, the world had. So had the city.

When Rheta Johnson's column about Royko came out, he read it and wrote her a note. "You should have spoken," he said. "I would have tipped my hat, bowed from the waist, and pinched you in the ass."

America cannot afford to lose many more such men as this.

ANDREW FERGUSON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SPEAK A FOREIGN LANGUAGE? SPEAK IT BETTER.

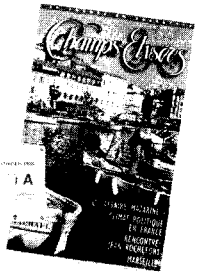
If you've ever studied a foreign language, you know that fluency doesn't come overnight. It generally takes years to master a second language—and an ongoing effort to maintain proficiency. Whether you choose to study on your own or in a class, with audiocassettes, books, or computers, sooner or later every course ends...and then what do you do?

Now you can continue your language study with *Champs-Elysées*. *Schau ins Land*, *Puerta del Sol*, and *Acquerello italiano*, internationally acclaimed audiomagazines for intermediate and advanced students of French, German, Spanish, and Italian.

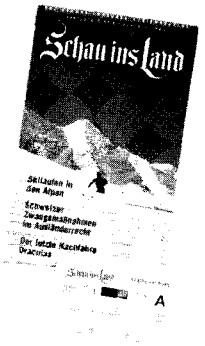
Each audiomagazine consists of an hour-long program on audiocassette packed with news, features, interviews, and music. A booklet containing a word-for-word transcript and an extensive glossary accompanies each tape. An optional study supplement with listening exercises and grammar drills also is available for each issue.

Because the audiomagazines are periodicals, language learning never ends. You continue to improve year after year. And you won't find a more entertaining way to work towards fluency.

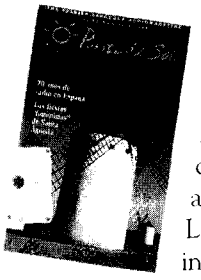
Champs-Elysées: The rich traditions and contemporary *élan* of France resonate through each edition of *Champs-Elysées*. Interviews with actress Emmanuelle Béart and eminent medical researcher Etienne Baulieu, a tour of a sculpture exhibit on the Champs-Elysées, and a feature on the 121st birthday of the seemingly immortal Jeanne Calment are among the recent segments on this lively French-language audiomagazine.



Schau ins Land: Professional journalists in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland provide a fascinating overview of German-speaking Europe every month in *Schau ins Land*. Recent programs have included interviews with tennis star Boris Becker and composer Karlheinz Stockhausen, as well as a visit to Vienna's Prater amusement park and a look at how the government's move from Bonn to Berlin is impacting the lives of federal employees.



Puerta del Sol: A talented production team in Madrid examines the colorful textures of Hispanic culture every two months in *Puerta del Sol*. Interviews with authors Carlos Fuentes and Laura Esquivel, a three-part series on the culture and heritage of Sephardic Jews, and a feature on the saffron harvest in La Mancha are just a sample of the intriguing segments on recent editions of this Spanish-language audiomagazine.



Acquerello italiano: Produced six times a year in Rome, *Acquerello italiano* showcases the vitality and style of contemporary Italy. The most recent program includes interviews with fashion designer Giorgio Armani and best-selling author Luciano De Crescenzo, as well as an update on the reconstruction of Venice's opera house and a profile of the separatist Northern League.

YES, Please rush me my first audiomagazine!

Champs-Elysées: ☐ 5 monthly editions (US$79) ☐ Study supplements (US$20)

Schau ins Land: ☐ 5 monthly editions (US$79) ☐ Study supplements (US$20)

Acquerello italiano: ☐ 6 bimonthly editions (US$89) ☐ Study supplements (US$30)

Puerta del Sol: ☐ 6 bimonthly editions (US$89) ☐ Study supplements (US$30)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

E-mail _____

☐ Check enclosed. Please charge my ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Card no. _____

Exp. date _____

Signature _____

Send check or money order to Champs-Elysées, Dept.KR4, P.O. Box 158067, Nashville, TN 37215-8067
Credit card orders may be faxed to 615.297.3138 Visit our Web site at http://www.champs-elysees.com

✆ Order By Credit Card: 1.800.824.0829

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Time to Get Beyond 1917

I read David Frum's "1917 and All That" (April 28) with great interest. While I agree with many of his premises, I was greatly disappointed that he failed to highlight another event in 1917 that contributed as much, if not more, to cynicism and fashionable anarchism in the West: the Russian Revolution. The 8.5 million horrible deaths from World War I are insignificant next to the number of Russians, Chinese, Koreans, Central Europeans, Cambodians, and Americans killed by the ideas of 1917. For seven decades after 1917, advocates of international revolution obtained encouragement and support for anything that would delegitimize the institutions and culture of the West, including the military, religion, and the family. The press and education have been significantly influenced in this process. As a result, we may have forgotten how to appreciate or even recognize progress, prosperity, and security.

How many in academe and the press are disappointed that downsizing did not lead to government-sponsored job-preservation schemes? How many are secretly disappointed that predictions of environmental and demographic disaster have not come to pass? How many consider the events of one night at the Tailhook convention more significant than hundreds of combat flights in service of democracy? Many of those attitudes can be traced to 1917, but not to the battlefields of Western Europe. They can be traced to a mindset that disparages the culture and institutions of the United States; one that seeks often to weaken democracy and hasten the arrival of a totalitarian utopia. The pessimistic and cynical messages continue to go out long after the collapse of the society that encouraged them.

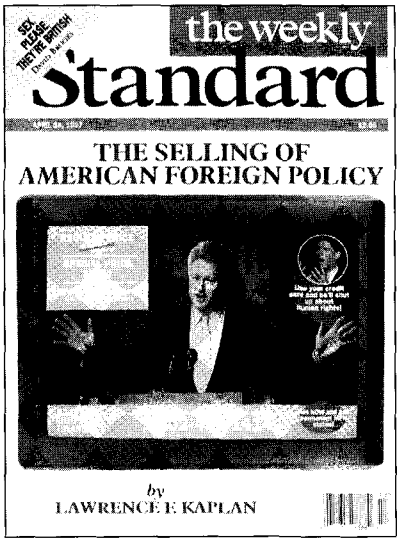
JOHN HEPP
FAIRFIELD, CT

What Would Lincoln Say?

In "Why CCRI is Constitutional" (April 21), Harry Jaffa correctly argues that the Constitution came into being to protect human rights proclaimed as God-given by the Declaration of Independence.

Abraham Lincoln, defender non pareil of the constitutional Union, never doubted that reality. On February 22, 1861, en route to his first inauguration, he declared, "I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence." At Gettysburg, in November 1863, he recalled the creation of "a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

CCRI states, "The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or natural origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting." That is the political essence of the Declaration and the Constitution. Who could explain the contrary position to Lincoln?



GORDON M. SEELY
BELMONT, CA

With respect to California's decision to approve CCRI, Professor Jaffa writes that it is a "great error" to believe that they are "the ultimate arbiter of questions of this magnitude." "The intelligent citizen unsophisticated in the arcana of present-day constitutional law," for whom Jaffa professes concern, should be clear as to what Jaffa is suggesting when he says that "the natural and God-given rights of human persons" "do not originate in those powers [established by the Constitution], nor are they dependent on them for their existence as rights."

This may sound unobjectionable and perfectly consistent with "judicial restraint." But in fact it is a peculiar "conservative" justification for the judicial activism we see everywhere today. According to Jaffa, the Constitution isn't so much made up of fixed rules, hammered out in imperfect "compromises" during the drafting convention, as it is the bearer of principles antecedent to all written law, principles enshrined in the Declaration of Independence. The proposition that where the Constitution is silent, the courts must not speak, is turned on its head in the Orwellian fashion Jaffa claims to disdain.

When Jaffa cites Jefferson for the proposition that majorities must be reasonable and Madison that they must act "rightfully," he is saying that judges have the power—indeed, the obligation—to take into account extra-constitutional principles, derived from inescapably vague notions of natural law, in making their decisions. Jaffa seeks to transmute the Declaration, a document with no standing in law, into our super-Constitution. Judges are free to read the Constitution's ringing phrases and divine whatever policies they prefer, so long as they have some relationship to the capacious proclamations of the Declaration.

This is no different from the judicial philosophies of, say, Chief Justice Warren or Justice Brennan. They and their votaries, when acting against the expressions of legislatures and the people in the name of constitutional rights, are only doing what is right and reasonable in their minds, according to their private notions of natural law and justice. That their policy preferences are not actually written in the Constitution is of little concern. Now, they may arrive at opinions different from those Professor Jaffa would prefer, but the methodology they employ is in essence the same as his. As Justice Iredell pointed out, 199 years ago in *Calder* v. *Bull*, "The ideas of natural justice are regulated by no fixed standard: the ablest and the purest of men have differed upon the subject." When jurists are routinely unfaithful to the Constitution, as its provisions were understood by the founders, it is not reasonable to expect of them the wisdom of St. Thomas Aquinas.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Correspondence

There is no escaping the fact that when you free the courts not merely from politics but from the law itself, judicial activism ensues. Jaffa's take is not better than Brennan's. CCRI is constitutional not because the Declaration or Abraham Lincoln may be cited in support, but because nothing in the Constitution as written contravenes it.

NATHANIEL T. TRELEASE
CHEYENNE, WY

SMALL DOSES ARE BETTER

I enjoyed reading Joseph Epstein's "My Detested Fellow Pilgrims" (April 28). Rather than use the brute force method of spending many hours at a time in a museum to appreciate art, Epstein needs to try a different strategy. He's just wearing out his eyes and making museum visits dreadful experiences. Could one enjoy six consecutive hours of Beethoven? Due to my job-related time constraints, I can spend no more than twenty minutes per visit at the National Gallery of Art. That's to my advantage.

PETER PARKER
ALEXANDRIA, VA

DOUBLE STANDARD FOR BIBI

I share Fred Barnes's irritation with the double standard demonstrated in the administration's attitude towards Benjamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat ("Bibi Gets the Bum's Rush," April 21). But I suspect it reflects a long-term liberal "reverse racism" rather than a short-term effort to pressure the Likud government. This subtle form of racism was brought to my attention by none other than Dean Rusk during a discussion of the anti-war movement. It implies that non-Westerners are essentially immature and therefore cannot and should not be held to the same standards as Westerners.

For liberals, consequently, any Israeli government that asks Arafat and the Palestinians to live up to their commitments, to end the vicious anti-Israeli propaganda, or to refrain from violence, is a government that seeks to undermine the peace process by asking the impossible.

JUDITH A. KLINGHOFFER
CHERRY HILL, NJ

CONSERVATIVE ALLIANCES II

Thank you for David Frum's excellent article "The Libertarian Temptation" (April 21). But his article includes three inaccurate points.

First, Ayn Rand was never a libertarian and probably squirms mightily in her grave every time she hears a conservative call her one. Rand developed the Objectivist philosophy and deplored what she considered its prostitution in the Libertarian party.

Second, Frum concludes that "without a shared understanding of what is right, what is moral, no political movement can long survive." He is undoubtedly correct as evidenced by the conservative Republican "revolution" that is dying on the vine for lack of unifying principles.

The Libertarian party's understanding of morality is simple: No one can belong to the party without signing a pledge saying that force and coercion are wrong. That pledge is easily identifiable for conservative and libertarian alike in criminal matters. Most conservatives can also agree with it as it is applied to government functions, i.e., regulation of business, confiscatory taxation, affirmative action, etc. Where they part company with libertarians is with social or individual issues.

Third, the idea that a person should be allowed to do something of his own choosing, even if it may be bad for him, is not the same as condoning it. Libertarians think that drugs should be legal, which does not mean that they condone drug use. It means that one man can't be forced to conduct his private affairs according to another man's personal preference. In a libertarian society, we could fire a drug user, expel him from school, not allow our children to associate with him, not rent to him, and in all other ways shun him when he engaged in that behavior. There would be no schizophrenic government waging "war" on the drug user while forcing non-drug users to pay for addictions as we do now through welfare and SSI payments. This kind of societal response worked before drugs were made illegal just as it worked for illegitimate births.

The ultimate difference between libertarians and conservatives is that the conservative still believes that there are certain areas in the realm of human conduct where government force is appropriate.

ANGELA J. GROVER
WOODBURN, OR

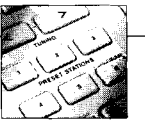
Consider, for the moment, that a libertarian is one who holds (with Lord Acton) that "Liberty is not the means to a higher political end." It is itself the highest political end. That view encompasses the fundamental premise of libertarianism and forms the basis for consensus on economic and political matters. Unfortunately, it does not provide cohesion on subjects that transcend those areas. Obversely, conservatives aim at preserving civilization. Their concerns go beyond the political arena and include national survival. A concern for civilization, however, does not provide cohesion when it comes to political matters. It could be said that conservatives are clear about the *why*, while libertarians are clear about the *how*.

Libertarians generally err in such subjects as foreign policy, since they see the need to protect the freedom of the individual, and not the need to maintain American and Western civilization. Conservatives err by legislating morality and imposing virtue. They envision the civilization they wish to achieve, without recognizing that the use of state coercion tends to counter their vision. With a touch of modesty, libertarians could acknowledge their weakness when it comes to the purposes for which man exercises his liberty; similarly, conservatives could acknowledge their weakness when it comes to the methods by which they improve the world.

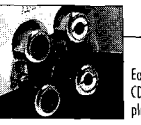
ALLEN WEINGARTEN
MORRISTOWN, NJ

THE WEEKLY STANDARD
welcomes letters to the editor.
Letters will be edited for length and clarity and must include the writer's name, address, and phone number.
All letters should be addressed:
Correspondence Editor
THE WEEKLY STANDARD
1150 17th St., NW
Washington, DC 20036.
You may also fax letters: (202) 293-4901.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Set six AM and six FM stations.



Easily connect your CD player, cassette player, TV, or VCR.

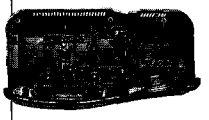
Hear why the Bose® Wave® radio was named a "Best New Product of 1994" by *Business Week*.

Tabletop radios are popular for their convenience and small size. But their sound quality leaves much to be desired. No one really expects high-fidelity sound from a radio. Until now.

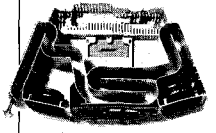
Bose presents the Wave radio. It's the one radio acclaimed by leading audio critics. Because it's the one radio that delivers big, rich, lifelike stereo sound *plus* a small, convenient size.

The best-sounding radio you can buy.

We think the Wave radio is the best sounding radio you can buy. And audio critics agree.



The speakers in conventional radios cannot produce lifelike bass, which is essential for great sound.

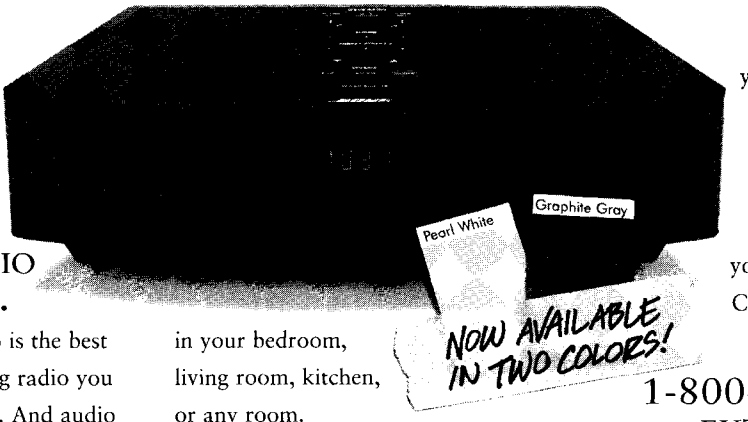


Only the Wave radio with acoustic waveguide speaker technology produces high-quality sound with full, rich bass.

Radio World called the sound "simply amazing...a genuine breakthrough in improved sound quality." *Business Week* named the Wave radio a "Best New Product of 1994." *Popular Science* called it "a sonic marvel" and gave it a prestigious "Best of What's New" award. The key is our patented acoustic waveguide speaker technology. Just as a flute strengthens a breath of air to fill an entire concert hall, the waveguide produces room-filling sound from a small enclosure. This technology and performance is available in no other radio.

You'll touch a button and hear your favorite music come alive in rich stereo sound. You'll hear every note the way it's *meant* to be heard. The Wave radio measures just 4.5"H × 14"W × 8"D and fits almost anywhere. So you can listen in your bedroom, living room, kitchen, or any room.

Hear The Radio That Woke Up An Entire Industry.



Remote-controlled convenience.

Operate the radio from across the room with the credit card-sized remote control. Set six AM and six FM stations, and switch between them at the touch of a button. You can even bring great Bose sound to recorded music, TV programs, or movies by connecting the Wave radio to your CD or cassette player, TV, or VCR.

Call now and make six interest-free payments.

The Wave radio is available for $349 directly from Bose, the most respected name in sound. Call 1-800-845-BOSE, ext. R4598, or return the coupon for free information or to learn more about our in-home trial and satisfaction guarantee. When you call, ask about our six-month installment payment plan.

Wired magazine said it has a "clean, sweet sound that will have your friends wondering where you've hidden your fancy speakers." But you have to hear the Wave radio for yourself to believe it. Call today.

Call 1-800-845-BOSE, ext. R4598.

When you call, ask about our six-month installment payment plan. (Available on telephone orders only.) Also ask about FedEx® delivery.

Please specify your color choice when ordering the Wave® radio:

☐ Pearl White ☐ Graphite Gray

Mr./Mrs./Ms.
Name (Please Print)

Address

City State Zip

( )
Daytime Telephone

( )
Evening Telephone

Mail to: Bose® Corporation, Dept. CDD-R4598, The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701-9168, or fax to 1-508-485-4577.

BOSE®
Better sound through research®

©1997 Bose Corporation. Covered by patent rights issued and/or pending. Installment payment plan option is not to be used in combination with any other offers. Price and/or payment plan are subject to change without notice. *Wired*, June 1994.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

No Deal

On May Day 1997, the Republican congressional leadership declared victory—and capitulated. The mammoth deal on the federal budget that brings it to balance by 2002 was a capitulation less to Bill Clinton than to fear. The high command of the Republican party fears nothing so much as having to make the case for, having to *fight* for, a Republican agenda. If it is to be real, a Republican agenda must be a conservative agenda, and conservative policies are controversial. Re-limiting government is hard; re-moralizing society is a formidable challenge; rebuilding our defenses may not win votes. So the Republican leadership decided they would rather deal than fight.

Ever since the bungled government shutdown in late 1995, much of the Republican establishment has been scared of its own shadow. It has been fearful of its own principles, doubtful of its own abilities, intimidated from advocating its own policies. Thus, last year's content-free GOP convention and idea-free Dole campaign. Thus, this year's agenda-free Republican Congress. The five-year budget deal follows in this path. It is an attempt to guarantee a content-free politics for the foreseeable future.

It won't work. Not just because Democratic unhappiness with the budget deal may bring it toppling down. But because this deal commits the Republican party to the current size, scope, and shape of the federal government—and if the Republican party is not about reducing and reforming Washington, it is about nothing.

The budget deal's implications go far beyond its mere fiscal outlines. The spirit of the deal will spill over—it has already spilled over—into every other aspect of our public policy debates. Why have congressional Republicans been unwilling to take on the existing system of racial preferences? Why this past week, were Republicans utterly silent when the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission announced that employers have to provide special accommodations for employees with any mental disability? Why didn't it occur to anyone in the congressional leadership to consider amending Title IX when the Supreme Court said this provision requires a draconian reshaping of the athletic program of every college and university in the country? Why did Senate Republicans refuse last week to embrace a strategy of challenging President Clinton's appointments to the federal courts?

They did—or didn't do—all these things for the same reason they are so enthusiastic about the budget deal: They have lost faith in their ability to prevail, either intellectually or politically, in their battles against Bill Clinton. His political talents have them baffled; they don't know how to fight him, and therefore they no longer want to try.

Because Bill Clinton was reelected last year, the Republican Congress will have to make compromises. But there's a fundamental difference between making particular compromises as necessity requires and embracing a political strategy of grand compromise. The Republican Congress can't simply get what it wants; it will, of course, have to come to terms with the president on appropriations bills, taxes, particular policy areas, and appointments. But to do this case by case is very different from signing on to a joint plan that shapes the fundamental contours of public policy for the next five years. What will the party stand for in the elections of 1998 and 2000?

The budget deal is a profound act of political self-mutilation because it commits the Republican party—the party of conservative reform—to the status quo. It commits the Republican party—the party of fundamental change—to mounting no fundamental challenge to current levels of taxes, domestic spending, and defense for the foreseeable future. All this so Republicans can avoid the difficult task of making real choices and serious arguments over the next months and years.

Worse, the budget deal will mean a Republican legitimization of Clintonism. Clinton's political strategy, it is now clear, is to move from big-government liberalism to what might be called "balanced-budget liberalism." Balanced-budget liberalism is the only way to save liberalism now that the era of enthusiasm for big government has ended.

And this deal will save liberalism. For if it goes

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

through, tax cuts are off the table as an issue in 1998. Defense is off the table as an issue in 2000. All the American voters will see is the contrast between Clinton's feel-good mini-proposals and Republican inarticulateness. Republicans will be on the defensive. The chance for an enduring realignment will be frittered away.

It need not be. A rebellion against this deal from the backbenches and from the grass roots can save the Republican party and the conservative cause. Ronald Reagan's 1976 assault on the Nixon-Ford policy of détente made possible the victory of 1980. Newt Gingrich's 1990 insurrection against the Bush budget deal laid the groundwork for 1994. In both these cases, a challenge to the Republican establishment strengthened and revivified the party. A healthy internal Republican debate was followed by a Democratic crackup (first in the late Carter administration, and then in the first two years of Clinton). As the battles over welfare reform and this deal itself among liberals show, another Democratic crackup might well be imminent. The budget deal offers Clinton a lifeline. Why are Republicans giving it to him?

It would be good if this deal were defeated by the Congress, but it's not necessary that it go down. After all, Reagan lost in 1976. Gingrich lost in 1990. This fight is not about legislative strategy or even about the details of budget policy.

This fight is about the future of the Republican party and the conservative movement. It is a fight that must be fought and can be won. And it is those brave souls who step forward to lead this fight who are likely to emerge at the head of a resurgent and victorious party in the year 2000. ♦

Fred Barnes Dissents

When President Bush signed on to a budget agreement in 1990 that jacked up spending and raised taxes, conservatives rebelled because the deal was so bad. Now President Clinton has agreed to a deal that blocks domestic spending increases beyond inflation, takes the first significant whack out of entitlements, and cuts taxes. And oh, yes, it does another not-so-small thing: It balances the budget. This is a deal that should prompt conservatives not to revolt again but to declare victory.

Nobody understands the meaning of the deal better than liberals. Congressional Democrats like Barney Frank and David Bonior and David Obey are apoplectic. Former labor secretary Robert Reich suggested in *Locked in the Cabinet* that Clinton's endorsement of a balanced budget in 1995 would mark the end of programmatic liberalism in Washington. That was only a prediction. The budget deal makes it a reality. And it locks in place a center-right coalition—conservative and moderate Republicans, plus the dwindling band of moderate Democrats—that should govern Washington for years to come.

Despite flaws, the deal is worthwhile both substantively and politically. In terms of substance, it is the best conservatives could hope for, given a Democrat in the White House. It is true that GOP negotiators retreated on health care, which will allow Medicaid to cover more children. But would Republicans have been tougher next year, an election year, in warding off Democratic efforts to expand the federal role in health care? They would probably have been more craven in 1998.

The most glaring problem with the deal is in the area of defense spending. Practically all Democrats, and Republicans such as John Kasich, believe defense should be cut brutally. They're wrong, but their view is bound to prevail for now whether there's a deal or not.

On the other hand, the accord with Clinton provides major *conservative* achievements. The cuts in capital-gains and inheritance taxes would be unattainable otherwise. Holding spending hikes at the level of inflation until 2002 means that, coupled with $53 billion in spending cuts the last two years, Republicans will essentially have frozen domestic spending at 1995 levels over seven years. Not bad. And now they also get $200 billion in entitlement savings (or an estimated $700 billion over 10 years) without the threat of massive Democratic attacks on them for hard-heartedness.

The deal does not require Republicans to sit on their hands for the next five years. "We can now move on all the other things conservatives believe in," says Rep. Bill Paxon. Nothing in the deal precludes Republicans from overhauling the tax code or seeking a (deficit-neutral) cut in personal tax rates. If the world changes and America is overtly threatened, they can increase defense spending. And so on.

Finally, the politics of the situation argued for a deal. What if Republicans had balked? Clinton would have murdered them, listing all the tax cuts he'd acceded to and blaming Republicans for impeding a balanced budget.

Sure, it feels good to erupt like Krakatoa over the idea of compromising with Clinton. But Republicans sometimes have to show they can govern as conservatives. By producing a balanced budget while slashing rather than raising taxes, they've done exactly that. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHY MAKE A DEAL?

by Stephen Moore

AMERICAN TAXPAYERS have come to regard Washington's budget deals much the way a dental patient responds to the whirling sound of the surgical drill. And for good reason. From Ronald Reagan's ill-fated support of the 1982 Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act (we're *still* waiting for the phantom three dollars of spending cuts promised for every dollar of new taxes from that misadventure) to George Bush's catastrophic 1990 Andrews Air Force Base summit, bipartisan budget deals invariably lead to bigger government, higher taxes, or both. This is one of those painful recurring lessons that the Republican establishment seems genetically incapable of learning.

To be sure, the 1997 budget deal between the White House and GOP congressional leaders is not nearly the disaster of 1982 or 1990. Those deals raised taxes. This will cut them—though by less than Republicans are advertising. Reasonable people can disagree on the merits of this plan. Republican leaders like Dick Armey and Tom DeLay have worked tirelessly to get the best deal out of Bill Clinton and moderate Republicans. But the price that Republicans are paying for the tax cuts—including $15 billion of new entitlements, the largest education spending increase in 30 years, and other increases in Clinton's domestic initiatives—may be too high.

FAR FROM CUTTING, OR EVEN FREEZING, DOMESTIC SPENDING, THIS BUDGET DEAL REACHES TOTALS THAT ARE TRULY GAUDY.

From the very start, what Newt Gingrich, Trent Lott, and the rest of the GOP negotiators have never been able to explain satisfactorily is: Why a budget deal at all? The case for a deal has always been predicated on flimsy premises. Foremost among these is the contention that the only hope for substantial deficit progress is through a negotiated settlement with the Clinton White House. History proves this tragically wrong. Contrary to Washington conventional wisdom, the nation's fiscal health improves most when bipartisanship breaks down.

The two periods of greatest budget austerity in the past 20 years were, first, the late Reagan years of 1986-89, when the fiscal shackles of Gramm-Rudman dragged domestic spending growth down below the inflation rate while the deficit tumbled from $220 to $152 billion, and second, 1995, the first fiscal year of the Republican-controlled Congress. The protracted budget stalemate, the two federal shutdowns, and the continuing resolution that funded agencies at 90 percent of the previous year's level caused the deficit to plunge by $57 billion. That was the second steepest single-year decline in red ink since the end of the Second World War. No budget deal has ever come close to this deficit-cutting performance.

These two episodes highlight a compelling political lesson that fiscal conservatives inside and outside of Congress should take to heart: If the goal is truly to sweat out savings from our bloated $1.7 trillion federal budget, there is a lot to be said for blessed gridlock.

Here lies the problem: These budget negotiations are *not* primarily motivated by a desire to sweat out savings from the budget. Just the opposite. "The popular perception that Republicans want to cut domestic spending is false," noted Sen. Phil Gramm during a burst of candor in his office before a gathering of conservative budget analysts. "Many Republicans want to increase it." On April 17, Gramm, Sam Brownback of Kansas, and eight other seething Senate Republicans shot off a letter to Lott protesting that they "cannot in good conscience support a budget deal" that does not at least freeze domestic non-entitlement spending. "A bad budget deal," they wrote, "is worse than no deal at all."

This deal does not freeze domestic spending—far from it. Although the final numbers are still being tweaked, the totals are truly gaudy. Gingrich recently confessed that "to get this deal we will probably have to swallow more domestic spending than we would like." That may be the understatement of the year. The latest draft document endorses discretionary spending levels from 1998-2002 at $70 billion above a freeze. This is well above inflation. In fact, the deal is to the left of the Clinton White House circa 1996: *It envisions spending some $80 billion more over the next five years on domestic agencies than Bill Clinton agreed to in his own budget last year.*

Almost all of this windfall for the federal government—$70 billion—would fill the political war chests of left-wing special-interest groups, from Planned Parenthood to the National Council of Senior Citizens to the Children's Defense Fund to the National Education Association. These new funding levels would also mean clemency for the National Endowment for the Arts, the Legal Services Corporation, Americorps, and scores of other programs and agencies conservatives have been trying to end for years.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

All this extra spending is said to be justified in order to resuscitate "vital domestic investments" suffocating from years of alleged fiscal neglect. This is one of those fairy tales told and retold so many times that they become embedded in the Washington culture. Over the past 10 years, 1988-97, federal domestic spending has soared from $622 billion to $1.116 trillion. After adjustment for inflation, this is an increase of 40 percent. During this supposed era of restraint, we have been in the midst of the steepest and most prolonged domestic spending build-up since Lyndon Johnson launched the Great Society. Today, domestic spending consumes 66 percent of the federal budget—its highest share in American history.

Two years ago Newt Gingrich and the Republicans boldly declared they would prove to America that they could end federal programs, not just start them. So how many cabinet agencies will the budget deal call for eliminating? None. How many major spending programs, of the hundreds upon hundreds in the budget, would it terminate? My bet is that in the end the final number will be close to zero. This is a victory?

The so-called entitlement reforms in the package are probably the greatest fantasy of all. The vaunted $110 billion in Medicare "reforms" are trumpeted as a major victory for Republicans. Hardly. The savings level is only slightly higher than what Bill Clinton already offered Republicans in last year's budget fight. Moreover, the reforms themselves will be worthless if they simply require Republicans to defer to Clinton's policy proposals of raising premiums and squeezing Medicare savings out of doctors and hospitals through price controls. Price controls and premium hikes might marginally reduce Medicare's insolvency in the short term, but they do nothing to fix the fundamentally flawed structure of Medicare. And by planting the seeds of $15 billion in Medicare and Medicaid expansions, such as a kiddie-care program, the budget deal may ultimately make the long-term entitlement problem worse.

The fatal flaw in the GOP's health-care strategy for three years now has been a preoccupation with budget numbers, not the policy reforms themselves. By far the most valuable health-care reform of all, Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs), would permanently pre-empt the Left's attempt to nationalize health care. It is worth *increasing* the deficit in order to make MSAs widely available. Yet the latest version of the budget deal does not force Clinton to accept even minimal expansions of MSAs.

THREE YEARS AGO THE REPUBLICANS MADE A CONTRACT WITH AMERICA THAT PROMISED TAX CUTS THREE TIMES AS BIG AS THESE.

To be sure, the tax cuts—particularly the reduction in the capital-gains rate to 20 percent, the doubling of the estate-tax exemption to $1.2 million, and the expansion of IRAs—are valuable White House concessions. The capital-gains tax cut will liberate hundreds of billions of dollars of captive capital and contribute to an increase in tax revenues, both in the short and long terms. And there will be a scaled-down version of the $500 tax credit for children that was part of the Contract With America.

But are these tax cuts worth Republicans' waving the white flag in virtually every other area of the budget? Are they worth granting the White House $70 billion of extra funds to pump into the Left's playpen of failed New Deal and Great Society programs?

The answer is probably no, especially considering that the tax cut is smaller than advertised. The reported net tax cut is $85 billion over five years. Up to $23 billion of this could pay for Bill Clinton's college-tuition tax credits, which will simply inflate tuition and prove worthless. And the $85 billion number is inflated in any case, because the deal includes a change in the consumer price index that will actually raise taxes $20 billion by pushing many middle-income Americans into higher tax brackets.

So the actual net tax cut is about $65 billion over five years. Five years ago Bill Clinton raised taxes by three times that amount. Three years ago Republicans promised a Contract With America containing tax cuts three times this large. Out of an $8 trillion revenue base, the budget deal will trim Americans' tax burden by less than one cent on the dollar.

The most compelling argument against the budget deal is that there is another path that offers greater fiscal gain. If Republicans killed the budget deal, they could instead pass individual spending and tax bills. This would set up a series of political battles that would force Clinton either to sign the bills into law or to issue unpopular vetoes. This is the strategy that worked so brilliantly for Republicans on welfare reform. They trapped Clinton in his own "New Democrat" rhetoric, and they could do so again and again on the budget this year.

Here's how a non-budget-deal strategy would work:

First, Republicans have to take the possibility of a government shutdown out of play. The funding bill for Red River flood victims should include John McCain's idea of automatically funding all government programs at 98 percent of last year's level if an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

appropriation has not been approved by the beginning of the fiscal year. The White House will be tied into knots explaining why it would veto a bill that protects *against* a shutdown—not to mention a bill intended to help Americans whose homes have nearly been washed away. Once the McCain provision is in place, if Clinton rejects congressional spending bills, the GOP can make the case that any federal agency in Washington can tighten its belt enough to save 2 cents on the dollar.

Second, Republicans could freeze domestic appropriations at the 1997 level. This would simply enforce what liberal Democrats agreed to back in 1993; it is what Clinton's own budget last year endorsed. Why retreat from it?

Third, Republicans could accept Bill Clinton's Medicare and Medicaid savings, but adopt free-market reforms. In its February budget the White House endorsed roughly $100 billion of Medicare and Medicaid savings. Congress can inoculate itself from another "Medi-scare" campaign by simply accepting Clinton's numbers, but replacing his policies with market-based reforms. This might involve instituting an income-tested increase in Medicare deductibles and expanding MSAs. After all, the stampeding costs of Medicare and Medicaid are as much a political headache for the Left as for the Right. If the Left really wants the entire federal budget in the next century to be devoted to sending checks to wealthy senior citizens, so be it; that would probably be an improvement over the way money is misspent in Washington today.

Fourth, Republicans could pass a $100 to $200 billion tax cut, pay for it through cuts in corporate welfare, and force Bill Clinton to say yea or nay. Republicans seem to forget that Clinton campaigned in 1996 on cutting taxes. So they could send him a tax cut he would be hard pressed to veto. A $100 to $200 billion, five-year tax cut could easily be financed by cutting spending from the $65 billion annual corporate safety net, starting with closing down the Commerce Department, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Export-Import Bank, sugar price supports, and others. Ending business subsidies would pay for the complete elimination of the capital-gains and estate taxes. Cutting welfare for the well-off is good policy and good politics. Republicans shouldn't be funding

After us, it's all old news. Every Friday night on PBS, *Washington Week in Review* leads the weekend news programs. Join commentator Ken Bode and Washington's most savvy reporters for up-to-the-minute insights on the most vital issues of our day. Seven days in 30 minutes.

SEE IT ON PBS

A Production of WETA WASHINGTON, D.C.

Ford — Funded by Ford Motor Company

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Robert Reich-style industrial-policy programs.

Finally, Republicans could use the fact that there is no overarching deal to pick popular fights with the Left and keep the pressure on government. There are some things worth fighting against, like the National Endowment for the Arts and the Commerce Department. Boarding up these agencies would allow Republicans to show the electorate the tangible accomplishments in 1998 they think they need from a budget deal.

Going in another direction would also allow the party to abandon the fraud of five-year budgeting. Polls show that almost two-thirds of Americans do not believe that any plan will balance the budget by 2002. And they are right. The useful life of any budget is at most *one* year. Five-year plans have been failures in China, Russia, and now Washington, D.C. The goal of the budget this year should be to downsize government and cut taxes as much as possible *now*.

In the end, despite the tax cuts, fiscal conservatives should oppose the new budget deal because it simply allows the government to grow far too much—and in all the worst places. A bad deal really is worse than no deal at all. On balance, this is a bad deal. Republicans should just say no.

Stephen Moore is director of fiscal-policy studies at the Cato Institute.

Don't Cut Defense

by Robert Kagan

When Secretary of Defense William Cohen told Pentagon officials working on the soon-to-be-released Quadrennial Defense Review that their planning should be "strategy driven, budget constrained," what he meant was "budget-driven, strategy-constrained." The quaint notion that America's defense posture should be determined by the international environment and the requirements it imposes on the world's leading power no longer has many adherents in Washington. Just ask the people who negotiated the budget deal whether they based their five-year defense figures on the nation's strategic requirements or the need to find a number that balanced by 2002. But ask them in private.

These days it's budget first, strategy second. Since the end of the Cold War, earnest efforts to shape a foreign and defense policy suited to America's role in the new era have been trampled in the bipartisan rush to plunder the one mine of "discretionary" spending not jealously guarded by powerful blocs of voters. Thus the strategy for maintaining American preeminence proposed by the Bush administration after the Gulf War, which called for spending between $290 billion and $300 billion (a modest 3.5 percent of today's GDP) on a base force of 1.6 million troops, gave way immediately to the Clinton administration's Bottom-Up Review, which called for a smaller, cheaper force capable of responding to two "major regional contingencies" (MRCs) simultaneously. But even that dubious plan died in infancy when it became clear that, despite its more limited conception of defense strategy, it was still too expensive for both the budget-cutting conservatives and the free-spending liberals.

Now, in order to squeeze more savings out of the budget—without cutting non-defense discretionary spending, of course—the "strategy" will have to change again. Forget the base force. Forget two MRCs. Those ideas are already "outdated," say the esteemed members of a congressionally appointed National Defense Panel. Why? Because we don't choose to afford them. According to the panel's chairman, Philip Odeen, "We ought to be operating around the [budget] numbers." And the numbers have nothing to do with strategy.

In this way have we been progressively "defining national security down," to paraphrase Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan. After all, the world has not changed since 1992. All that's changed has been our willingness to spend money on defense and foreign policy. The need for the United States to preserve the peace and a stable balance of power in Europe and East Asia has not diminished, nor has the need to deter aggression by Iran or Iraq in the Gulf, to deter a Chinese attack against Taiwan and aggression in the South China Sea, to maintain stability in the Middle East, to prevent the spread of war in the Balkans, to fight and deter international terrorism, or to rescue Americans from flash-fires in Albania and Africa. The possibility that the United States might confront two crises in two different theaters is neither larger nor smaller than it was four years ago.

If anything, America's overseas commitments are growing, as are the risks those commitments might entail. Within the next couple of years, the United States is likely to extend security guarantees to Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, and perhaps to other Central European and Baltic states. Do Clinton administration officials and Republican boosters of NATO expansion believe we can guarantee the securi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

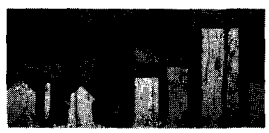
ty of these new NATO members with fewer army divisions, fewer air wings, and lower overall defense spending? Meanwhile, on the other side of the world, China is a rising power. Whether one chooses a policy of engagement or containment of China, a strong U.S. military presence in East Asia is necessary for preserving peace and stability. And it is one way of steering Chinese development along a peaceful course.

Members of Congress and Clinton administration officials who negotiated last week's budget deal ought to say which of the above policies they intend to forgo in coming years. For even at the levels of defense spending proposed by the administration and the Republicans before the deal was struck, many of these missions, which today we take for granted as part of the normal exercise of American power around the world, will have to be dropped.

Bush administration officials figured 12 army divisions were needed just to preserve the international status quo after the Cold War. The Clinton administration reduced that number to 10. At the spending levels reportedly contained in the budget deal, we'll be lucky to maintain nine and not at an acceptable level of readiness. The United States used seven divisions in Operation Desert Storm alone. Clinton defense officials estimated that one major regional contingency, like Korea, would require between four and five divisions. Since two divisions are tied down by the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia, and parts of two more divisions are in Saudi Arabia or engaged in training in the United States, any crisis in Korea would stretch the army to the point of operational collapse. The other services are not in much better shape. The Air Force has had tactical squadrons cut by 28 percent, and experts estimate that its ability to move rapidly between different theaters has fallen by about 22 percent. The Navy has also been forced to cut significantly into its ability to support overseas operations and can deploy fewer carrier task forces around the world. When American presidents need a show of American resolve to deter potentially dangerous nations—as President Clinton did in the seas around Taiwan last year—they usually call on aircraft carriers. The question is, five years from now, will there be anyone at the other end of the line?

Some defense experts have argued that in the

The Mother of All Specials.



STATE OF THE UNION

Think you know your mother? Think again. *State of the Union* on PBS examines the institution of motherhood with findings that are equal parts loving, revealing, and startling. Join host Dave Iverson and discover the mother you never knew you had. Watch *State of the Union: Mother's Day Special* – Friday evening, May 9th, on PBS. Check local listings.

SEE IT ON PBS ™

A production of Wisconsin Public Television, WETA Washington, D.C. and KTCA St. Paul, with the participation of USA TODAY and National Public Radio's *Talk of the Nation.* Funding by The Ford Foundation, The Pew Charitable Trusts and PBS.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

future era of high-technology warfare, current force levels won't be needed. They're almost certainly wrong: The successful high-tech air-war against Iraqi forces did not preclude the need for a massive ground attack to retake Kuwait. But even if they are right, the proposed levels of defense spending will not produce the high-tech force they desire. Funds for modernization continue to be cut drastically—over 50 percent since the mid-1980s. Even chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff John Shalikashvili has warned that procurement spending is 40 percent below what it should be. Funds for research and development of the next generation of high-tech weapons, which have already been cut a staggering 71 percent since 1985, are to be cut another 16 percent in the years 1997-2002 under the Clinton administration's original budget proposal.

Debates have raged in the defense community about whether we should spend money to maintain force structure and readiness or to build the new high-tech weapons we will need a decade or so from now. The truth is, we need to be doing both. In fact, under the defense budget now proposed, we are likely to do neither.

The Clinton administration, which daily proclaims the United States the "indispensable" nation, seems not to be the least bit concerned that its defense budgets are rapidly turning us into the "indisposed" nation. But Republicans in Congress haven't yet shown any greater sense of responsibility for securing the nation's future. The Clinton defense-budget figures for future years were actually higher than the Republicans', and in a dubious victory, the Republicans prevailed in the budget deal. The result is a further cut in defense spending over the next five years of about $80 billion in real dollars. Non-defense discretionary spending, one need hardly add, continues to grow.

No leader of either party has had the courage to tell the American people that preserving the current benevolent international environment may be less expensive than fighting the Cold War, but not that much less. We keep cashing in the same "peace dividend" over and over.

At the height of the Cold War in the 1980s, the United States spent over 6 percent of its GDP on defense. In the Bush years, the defense budget fell to about 4 percent of GDP. It is now heading toward 3 percent, and at spending levels envisioned by the budget deal it will fall to around 2.7 percent by 2002. You have to go back before Pearl Harbor to find Americans spending less of our national wealth on defense than we do today.

Republican leaders, who once had a well-deserved reputation for preserving the nation's strength and security, ought to know better. Spending cuts are nice, but what's really likely to break the budget is another major war—like the one we are inviting when the world's foremost power cuts its military forces deep into the bone.

Robert Kagan is a contributing editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

PARTY AN

by Roger Kimball

IN THE GREAT COMPETITION FOR MAKING the most morally fatuous remark of the 20th century, the novelist E.M. Forster must be considered a leading contender. His famous declaration, "If I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country," perfectly epitomizes a certain species of preening self-infatuation that is at once naive and pernicious. Forster never seems to have twigged that by betraying his country he would have been betraying his friends in the most categorical manner. But what gives his remark that special extra fillip of obnoxiousness is Forster's presumption of superior virtue, deposited like an unpleasant smell before the reader.

Forster's remark came to mind last week when the *New York Times* ran a story about Pham Xuan An, an American-educated Vietnamese who, during the Vietnam War, was simultaneously a correspondent for *Time* and a colonel in the army of North Vietnam—in other words, an enemy spy. An, now a retired general in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), was in the news because he was denied an exit visa to participate in a public forum about the legacy of the Vietnam War and the future of U.S.-Vietnamese relations held at the Asia Society in New York on April 28.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What was remarkable about the *Times*'s story was not the fact that the North Vietnamese had a spy working for a major American news magazine. Indeed, given the nature of the American press coverage of the war, one would almost have suspected it. It was the reaction of An's former colleagues in the American press corps to the revelation of his espionage that was stunning.

The journalists whom the *Times* talked to about An's activities were nothing if not distinguished: Frank McCulloch from *Time*, Morley Safer from *60 Minutes*, and David Halberstam and Stanley Karnow, both Pulitzer-prize-winning scribes. If these distinguished gentlemen of the Fourth Estate were irked by anything, it was Vietnam's refusal to grant their old pal a visa to join their reunion party at the Asia Society. About An's activities as a spy, they were all forgiveness. The *Times* did quote Burton Yale Pines, a correspondent for *Time* in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970, who was justly outraged at the revelation of An's espionage. But his was a lone voice. The rest might have taken their motto from Christopher Marlowe: "That was in another country, and besides, the wench is dead." Karnow, for example, explained in Forster-like syllables that An's "loyalty in the case of America was to his colleagues. His loyalty to Vietnam was to his nation. He felt he was doing his patriotic duty by being an agent, but we were his friends . . ." And what about Karnow's "loyalty . . . to his nation"? Where does that come into the picture? What about his "patriotic duty"? Perhaps the receipt of a Pulitzer prize relieves one of such mundane claims on one's attention.

Let's be clear about what it was that An actually did in pursuit of his patriotic duty during the Vietnam War. "I had access to all the Vietnamese bases and their commanders," the *Times* quotes him as saying. "My superiors wanted to know the strengths of various units. They wanted estimates of the capabilities of commanders—who was corrupt and who was corruptible. They wanted all the political stuff, the same as you guys wanted." Who can say what effect this information had on our prosecution of the war? How many U.S. soldiers were killed or wounded because the enemy went into battle with a foreknowledge of our troop strength? How many corrupt or corruptible commanders were got to—and with what results?

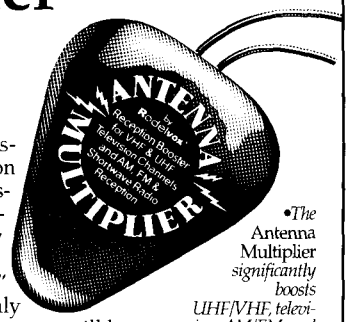
Of course, the article in the *Times* was great publicity for the forum at the Asia Society, and the event played to a nearly full house. The panel, moderated by Karnow, consisted of Safer, Halberstam, Bobby Muller, president of the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, and Ngo Quang Xuan, the Vietnamese U.N. ambassador, who had been invited at the last moment to take An's place.

Anyone with a taste for dada would have enjoyed the proceedings. The ostensible subject of the evening's discussion was "Vietnam: Then, Now, and Future." But the major themes were "reconciliation," Vietnam's nasty regime, and the 1,200-mile biking event from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City that the forum's co-sponsor, World T.E.A.M. ("The Exceptional Athlete Matters") Sports, had planned for the dis-

Get TV reception you never had before, with the ...

Antenna Multiplier™ still only $29.95*

**But read this ad for an even better deal!*



•The Antenna Multiplier *significantly boosts UHF/VHF, television, AM/FM, and shortwave radio reception.*

You won't need it if you are connected to a cable system, but if you are not you will now get TV reception that you could never enjoy before. Inside its plastic housing, the *Antenna Multiplier*™ hides a small technical miracle—an array of electronic components that literally multiplies the reception power of your TV. The *Antenna Multiplier*™ stabilizes your TV picture, eliminates "ghosts" and static, and brings in stations that were until now only visible as flickers and annoying shadows. In most areas you will be able to eliminate any outdoor antenna completely (limited by atmospheric or geographic constraints). The *Multiplier*™ needs no outside power—it gets its "juice" right through your TV set. You place the *Multiplier*™ on the television set itself, lay it on a nearby table, or hang it on the wall. And, of course, you can bid your messy and ineffective rabbit ears, loop, rod, or dish antennas good-bye. *Antenna Multiplier*™ will not just enhance your TV reception, it also vastly improves AM/FM radio reception and brings in new stations on multiband and shortwave receivers, for new entertainment alternatives.

We are the exclusive importers of the *Antenna Multiplier*™ in the United States and can therefore bring you this outstanding TV accessory for just $29.95. But we have an even better deal: ***Buy two for $59.90, and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** Unleash the full power of your television with *Antenna Multiplier*™ . Order it today!

FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 797-7367
24 Hours a Day, 7 Days a Week.

For quantity orders (100+), call Peaches Jeffries, our Wholesale/Premium Manager at (415) 543-6675 or write her at the address below.

Please give order Code #1006C931. If you prefer, mail check or card authorization and expiration. We need daytime phone # for all orders and issuing bank for charge orders. Add $4.95 standard shipping/insurance charge (plus sales tax for CA delivery). You have 30-day return and one-year warranty. We do not refund shipping charges.

since 1967
haverhills®
185 Berry St., San Francisco, CA 94107

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

abled as well as the able-bodied in January 1998.

Without doubt the saddest performance was by Bobby Muller, himself a disabled vet, whose quest for "reconciliation" with his former enemies seems to have led him to demonize the United States. During the question period, several representatives from T.E.A.M. Sports also dilated on the idea of reconciliation. One eager young woman asked whether their biking event might not provide a much-needed "vicarious catharsis." Someone wondered aloud how a catharsis could be "vicarious" and still cathartic, but a truculent man who nodded excitedly every time anyone uttered the word "Internet" insisted loudly that Aristotle would have agreed.

HARDLY A WORD WAS SPOKEN IN RESPONSE TO THE NEWS THAT THE JOURNALISTS' COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND HAD BEEN AN ENEMY AGENT.

Aristotle would have agreed, at any rate, that "Vietnam: Then, Now, and Future" roused the emotion of pity if not fear—unless it be fear for the moral fiber of this country's opinionmakers. There was the usual browbeating that one discovers whenever a critical mass of liberal piety meets the subject of the Vietnam War. A woman informed the audience that, now that there were no anti-war demonstrations to attend, she regularly made pilgrimages to Vietnam to try to help expiate the guilt of the United States for ever being in the war. A young man got up and lectured us about the environmental depredations of the war.

But about the issue that probably brought most people to the forum in the first place—the response of American journalists to the revelation that they had worked alongside and befriended a man who turned out to be an enemy agent—hardly a word was spoken.

Karnow began by describing An as the absent "star" of the evening. The Vietnamese ambassador was repeatedly taxed for an explanation of why his government had refused to let An come and reminisce with his old buddies. He didn't really have one. But then the distinguished journalists on the panel didn't have any explanations either. There was great consternation, though, after a member of the audience asked each panelist to give his "personal ethical assessment" of An's activities as a spy. Personal what assessment? Personal ethical what? What ethical? They just didn't get it. Maybe it was the word "ethical." Or maybe it was the rancid politics of the 1960s, which ruined so many of the best and the brightest, blinding them with presumption of superior virtue, as E.M. Forster had been blinded by the pieties of Bloomsbury to the most elementary moral and political realities.

Roger Kimball is executive editor of the **New Criterion.**

Maple Leaf Ragged

by David Frum

It's 1958, a year awash with liberal self-confidence. In treasury departments across the planet, clever young Keynesians are turning the economic heat up and down with the precision of French chefs. Growing economies are kicking in money to be spent on ever more lavish social benefits. Conservatism is a laughable, discredited political force. And who is governing the United States, Britain, and Canada? The Republican Dwight Eisenhower, the Tory Harold Macmillan, and the Conservative John Diefenbaker.

Fast forward to 1997. The Left is as humiliated and discredited as conservatives were 40 years ago. Governments everywhere are obsessed with cutting public spending, reducing budget deficits, and opening their economies up to foreign trade. And who is governing the North Atlantic countries? The Democrat Bill Clinton, the Laborite Tony Blair, and the Liberal Jean Chrétien.

Anybody see a pattern?

On June 2, Prime Minister Chrétien will be seeking reelection in Canada. Barring some astonishing collapse of support, he will get it. His Liberals have coasted along at just under 45 percent in the polls for most of the past four years—more than sufficient to win a parliamentary majority in Canada's new five-party federal political system.

Chrétien won election the first time, in 1993, by promising to reverse the legacy of the deeply unpopular Conservative government of Brian Mulroney. He said he would cancel the U.S.-Canada free-trade agreement Mulroney signed in 1988, would repeal the national goods-and-services tax that Mulroney had imposed, and would stop fretting so much about Canada's crushing public debt and instead spend, spend,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

spend on "infrastructure" jobs.

In office, Chrétien has broken every single one of those pledges. Not only did he maintain the U.S.-Canada free-trade agreement, he signed NAFTA. The goods-and-services tax remains squarely in place. And the Chrétien government has made Canada's debt and deficit an even higher priority than the Mulroney government did. Since 1994, stringent spending cuts and the revenues from Mulroney's taxes have brought Canada to within hailing distance of a balanced budget.

This astonishing about-face has provoked strangely little resentment in Canada; stranger still, it has provoked not a whisper of dissent or complaint within Chrétien's own Liberal party. How is that possible? Well, the Liberals are no ordinary political party.

Canada is often said to be an impossible country to govern: two languages spread across four and a half time zones, a weak national identity, a ramshackle federal system. But the Liberals have in fact governed it for 70 of the 101 years since 1896, a record unmatched by any democratic political party (and by precious few undemocratic parties for that matter). You don't accumulate that sort of win-loss record by indulging in naive illusions about ideological consistency, or by tolerating backbench dissent when the government senses a shift in the political wind and tacks accordingly.

IF THE POLLS ARE RIGHT, THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ENGLISH AND FRENCH CANADA WILL LOOK EVEN STARKER AFTER JUNE 2.

Canada, like the United States and Britain, has been moving to the political right for most of the past two decades. That may sound like a weird diagnosis of a country that in its last federal election squashed its Conservative party, but it's true. Canada's Progressive Conservatives have long been a party of a squishiness that would embarrass even a Lowell Weicker. The small band of right-wingers within the party was kept at bay with occasional symbolic concessions and taunting reminders that it had nowhere else to go.

But as conservative ideas gained strength in Canada, the ideological Right did find someplace to go: It migrated to the new Reform party, based in Canada's west. Reform broke through in 1993, winning 17 percent of the vote and 52 seats in the then-295-member House of Commons. The Conservatives retained 16 percent of the vote, but without a geographic base they kept only two seats.

The Right has continued its rise. In 1993, the province of Alberta elected as its premier an amiable guy-on-the-next-barstool named Ralph Klein. Klein proceeded to cut public spending by almost 25 percent and balance a desperately indebted province's books without raising taxes. He was reelected with an enlarged majority two months ago. Then the province of Ontario, notorious for its caution and moderation, elected in 1995 an even more radical premier named Mike Harris. Harris promised to cut income tax rates by 30 percent while balancing the budget, abolish affirmative action, and remove the pro-union bias from the labor code. Thus far he's honored his commitments down to the last comma.

Both Reform and the Conservatives have adopted a Harris-style tax cut as the centerpiece of their campaign manifestoes. The last preelection poll put Reform at 12 percent and the Conservatives at 18 percent. But the parties are at war with one another, and the resulting split in the center-right vote almost guarantees that the Liberals—who these days can also semi-plausibly claim to be a right-of-center party—will sweep English Canada.

But the crushing victory the Liberals expect will bring them little joy. Since Canada was formed in 1867, every federal government that has lasted longer than a year has ruled with the support of a majority of Quebec's seats in Parliament. 1993 was the first time that ancient rule was broken. The Liberals won only 20 of Quebec's 75 seats, almost all of them in the English-speaking ridings of greater Montreal. All but one of the remainder were taken by the separatist Bloc Québecois, the federal counterpart of the Parti Québecois that holds power at the provincial level.

If the polls are right, the confrontation between English and French Canada will look even starker after June 2. Almost 200 English-speaking Liberals will confront more than 50 French-speaking *Bloquistes* across the aisle of the House of Commons. It won't help that Prime Minister Chrétien is a Quebecker himself: He's very unpopular in his province.

In October 1995, a referendum proposing the secession of Quebec failed by a mere 40,000 votes. In polls taken since then, almost two-thirds of French-speaking Quebeckers say they will vote "yes" next time. A federal parliament polarized along linguistic and ethnic lines will only strengthen that resolve. With another referendum expected in 1999 or 2000, it's beginning to look as if the last Canadian election of the twentieth century may prove to be the last election of a united Canada as well.

David Frum is a contributing editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THEY DID IT FOR THE CHILDREN

Or, What the Volunteerism Summit Was All About

By Matt Labash

Philadelphia

Some of its own boosters sold the Presidents' Summit for America's Future short. They called it a campaign for volunteerism, an effort to save 2 million at-risk children in three years, a drive for community renewal through corporate giving, and a blueprint to make sure every child has a safe place, an ongoing relationship with a caring adult, a healthy start, a marketable skill, and an opportunity to serve.

It was *so* much more.

It was "the greatest assemblage of American leaders in the history of our country" (Ed Rendell). It was a "dazzling array of ideas and proposals" (Mario Cuomo). It was an "earthquake" (Colin Powell), an attempt "to split the civic atom" (Harris Wofford). It will most likely "redefine citizenship" (Bill Clinton) and "change the world" (Oprah).

But to understand what the Summit was all about, you must also understand what the Summit was *not* about. It was *not* about politics. *So what* that, according to some Summit organizers who choose to remain anonymous, Al Gore had seen to it that possible presidential rival Bill Bradley was dropped as vice-chair in favor of Henry Cisneros. *So what* that ex-president George Bush's people didn't want any emphasis on Clinton's Americorps (Clinton, who vowed to double the size of his paid volunteer force, mentioned it six times in a 2,000-word speech anyway). *So what* that Clinton's people were unhappy with all the attention afforded Powell, so they insisted a cabinet secretary be on every panel. *So what* that Jimmy Carter's "scheduling conflict," which allowed him to attend the first day's neighborhood clean-up but required him to leave town before sharing a stage with Clinton during the Summit's Call to Action, was just an excuse. *So what* that Gore jostled to get onstage for that Call to Action, though this "is a Presidents' Summit, not a Vice-Presidents' Summit."

Staff writer Matt Labash last wrote for THE WEEKLY STANDARD *about Ellen DeGeneres.*

The Summit wasn't *about* politics, dammit! Gore put such suspicions to rest when he said: "Let's put all the divisions behind us." And they all did, too. Because the Summit was about "saving our children," about throwing in for the only cause that matters, about surrendering to your noblest instincts so that you transcend mere partisanship and appear to be something better than before. So that if you're Bush, you appear to be vindicated and relevant. So that if you're Carter, you appear to be a team player. So that if you're Gore, you appear to be selfless. So that if you're Powell, you appear to stand for something.

Which is not to say the Summit was about something as shallow as appearances. Or photo-ops. It was definitely *not* about photo-ops. Okay, so there were some photo-ops. Okay, lots of them. Like the one way down Germantown Avenue, a dilapidated stretch of North Philadelphia selected by the Summit for graffiti-removal and general beautification. There was the volunteer photo-op, where Summit attendees blanketed the boulevard, restoring graffiti-bombed steel shutters on abandoned businesses to their original battleship gray. There was the native photo-op, where many neighborhood regulars had changed out of their usual Astroturf-patiowear-shower-shoe-and-tank-T-shirt rigs into their church suits and feather-boa hats and were asking journalists for programming schedules so they could watch themselves on TV.

Most impressive of all was the Nicetown playground photo-op at the far end of Germantown, where a hulking jungle gym was being constructed on a patch of land about the size of a tennis court. During one dizzying moment, you could see Colin and Alma Powell, Al and Tipper Gore, Arianna Huffington, Arlen Specter, the governor of New Hampshire, the lieutenant governor of Arkansas, and a third of the Philadelphia Eagles. There was so much fame per square inch that nearly unnoticed was Miss America, Tara Holland, who was shadowed relentlessly by Democratic representative Mike McIntyre of North Carolina while she tossed mulch with a shovel in her

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

formerly pristine Bally's monk-strap patent-leather shoes. "They told me I was going to be reading on Reading Corners throughout the streets," she said wistfully.

During the Nicetown photo-op, Gore wasted no time with pleasantries as his advancemen pushed other celebrities out of the way. Upon arriving at the playground, he barely uttered a word. And why? Because this portion of the Summit was not about words, but action. So he immediately dove under the edifice in some kind of kamikaze Bob Vila tumble, out of the media's sight. What he was doing, no one can say, though we know it was serious work because the vice president was sporting work gloves and a carpenter's apron.

After he emerged, and after another playground worker loosened bolts so Gore would have something to tighten when he came out, he met up with Powell on a six-foot-high platform. They smiled, they embraced, they talked jungle-gym talk. And then, in another feat of derring-do, Gore bent at the knees and leapt up on a railing like some kind of Mohawk Tennessean from the Lost Tribe of High Steel—in order to stand near a spire. Powell, looking a little less eager, but not worried about being outdone since he's still not running in 2000, quickly followed suit.

WHAT GORE WAS DOING, NO ONE CAN SAY, THOUGH WE KNOW IT WAS SERIOUS BECAUSE THE VICE PRESIDENT WAS SPORTING WORK GLOVES.

They stood there together for the children, partisanship aside, obstructed from the chest up by the spire, which they weren't exactly hammering or screwing, just kind of . . . guiding. And for 10 minutes, they continued to guide, with their wheezing midriffs providing an unusually protracted photo-op. It wasn't about photo-ops or politics, however—it was about "two guys trying to put a playground together," in the words of Powell, though the playground was nearly finished by the time they got there.

But its state of completion doesn't matter, because the Summit wasn't just about tangible results. It was about good intentions. It was about leading by example, encouraging other good people to do good things. It's like the president said: With the era of Big Government over, it's time for the era of Big Citizenship—and volunteerism. True, many of the politicians who came here can claim a background in volunteerism only so far as they volunteered to come to the Summit to take small citizens to the woodshed for not being Big Citizens. But they're doing it now. They're getting mulch on their Bally's, and why? For the children. Because the Summit was *not* about showbiz.

Okay, so there were some showbiz elements. Some celebrities. Tons of them, actually. But they weren't just there to add glitz. They seemed fairly serious about the Summit—fairly serious generally. They had been thinking about issues, starting their own foundations—all of this in the last week, in many cases. Brooke Shields was happy that education was being extolled at the Summit as one of the most important "resources." She has just created an Education Alliance, but it isn't quite up and running yet, and so she was flitting about the Summit. "Right now, we're sort of networking," she said.

Michael Bolton, a very serious singer, was concerned about the Summit's becoming "a big photo-op." But he came anyway, because "there's a mutual networking that goes on where you find other people who have mutual causes . . . and they find ways to somehow pool their resources." Because that's what the Summit is about—becoming active at all levels, forcing yourself out of comfort and complacency, meeting challenges. It's about getting involved in the community, as Wynonna Judd promised to do "as a mother, as a wife." Because her challenge, she said, was "to first of all stay sane in this business and healthy, to take care of myself, to be true to myself, and love myself."

And that's what Big Citizenship is all about—doing something big, anything, no matter how small, so that you can love yourself afterward. Sometimes it's necessary to look inward before we can look outward, to come up with creative solutions to age-old problems, to think "outside the box," as it were. Like Scientologist John Travolta, for instance, who at the Summit suggested exposing children to the curricula of L. Ron Hubbard. Those works enabled him, a high-school dropout, to become a jet pilot. And this wasn't just off-the-cuff lip service; Travolta showed up at a lunch with Powell and Clinton to push his idea to the top. "I've already talked to Barbara Bush," he told me, "and she's been very receptive."

And that really embodies the spirit of the Summit: the earnest advocacy of new ideas. So earnest was the Summit that during a program highlighting the "lighter side of volunteerism" produced by the Comedy Central cable network, Donna Shalala and Arlen Specter were two of the "humorists."

That same spirit of earnestness is perhaps best embodied by former senator Harris Wofford, now head of Americorps and one of the Summit's conven-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ers. We walked together through a North Philly neighborhood, a somewhat bad neighborhood, and we thought we were lost, but Wofford didn't care. I mean, about where we were. He *cares,* of course. He cares a lot. He is so earnest that as he talks and walks, he touches—my shoulder, my elbow, my back. He tells me about the other spirits of the Summit: of altruism, of service, of dead guys—the founding fathers, Martin Luther King, and George Romney (the late Michigan governor who first had the idea for the Summit).

Wofford touches and walks, and talks and touches. And as I'm not yet certain I'm ready for a physical relationship with him, Wofford stops cold for an impromptu call-and-response with neighborhood onlookers. "You're in on the kind of movement that Martin Luther King helped start. Are you ready?" *Yes!* "Are you ready?" *Yes!* "Not just for today but for the next three years?" *Yes!* "The next 10 years?" *Yes!* "We've got to turn the tide for children and youth!"

That's what the Summit was about: getting people excited! Keeping them excited! Make the call, get the response! Like Clinton at the Summit: "After today is over, do you promise to keep working tomorrow?" *Yes!* "And next year?" *Yes!* "Until the job is done?" *Yes!* "I promise. Say it!" *I promise!* "Let's go to work."

And this is how we know the good work begun at the Summit will continue: because a promise is a promise. Because even if these politicians at this nonpolitical Summit don't have much experience with volunteerism themselves, they do know something about making promises.

Sure, it's easy to be cynical. The politicians told us that. They told us about the cynical media. In fact, most of the volunteers talked about the cynical media. Even the media talked about the cynical media—the 2,000 members of it who were at the Summit, who were courted so heavily by Summit organizers that lighting instructions were provided in our media guides for all the staged media events. There was even a panel called "The Role of the Media" with 14 members of the cynical media, at least 12 of whom talked about how they could bring that Summit spirit to work with them every day thereafter. Consuelo Luz, president of the Hispanic Radio Network, even said that "there ought to be a law" mandating national service.

Other cynical media panelists (including our own Bill Kristol) thought that might be a bit much. But it's refreshing to see such commitment. Because commitment is really what the Summit was all about. Personal commitments. And corporate commitments. Like LensCrafters's promise to provide eye care to 1 million needy children, or at least eye exams. The way it works, and this hasn't been as widely publicized as the general commitment, is that an "at-risk" child can get a free eye exam. Of course, if he has bad eyes and needs contact lenses, he'll have to pay for them. But this is *not* a cynical advertising ploy on LensCrafters's part. LensCrafters is nothing like the media. In fact, if one of these at-risk children with poor eyesight wants to buy contacts, he's free to go to Pearle Vision—and some children probably will.

But fine print aside, the LensCrafters commitment is just that—a commitment. And it's, once again, about the children. Because that's what it's all about. Hatching new strategies to save the children and giving those children a voice. Kind of like we did at the Young Leaders Plenary at the Summit. After standing in a circle and tossing pens at each other in order to learn the names of our new acquaintances (*Watch out, April! Thank you, Tamika!*), we broke into small groups headed by facilitators. Facilitating dialogue and properly networking to put people in touch with valuable resources is really what the Summit is all about.

So the teenage delegates, who came from across the country and were part of larger adult delegations of volunteers, sat at a table with an adult facilitator named Maura from the philanthropic group Do Something. ("Do what?" you might ask. "Do *something,*" they'd reply). When Maura refreshed us on the goal of the Summit—to save 2 million at-risk children—the youth grew inquisitive. "How are we gonna do that?" asked one.

"I don't know that answer," said Maura, "and I think that's a good question that should be raised in your delegation to try and find an answer."

"What *are* 'at-risk' children?" asked another.

"Great question," replied Maura, "and again, I think these should be raised in your delegation, because I don't think there are any set answers."

Just more questions. One frustrated youth who complained all the adults do is "plan, and plan, and plan" asked, "Can we go? I have a dinner appointment at 5:30?"

Patience, my dear. It is a virtue learned over time. Every solution is not to be found today. Every fix is not as concrete and immediate as, say, the mayor's task force survey from Allentown, Pennsylvania, which was making the rounds at the Summit. The Allentown survey suggested saving at-riskers by providing "a graffiti wall" and "yoga classes" as well as "bringing [the basketball rim] down for smaller people." But most solutions evolve over time, and time involves process. And it is this devotion to process—to the breakout meetings, the plenaries, the Presidents' Summit, and the follow-up youth summits, community

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

summits, PR summits, CEO summits, virtual summits—that facilitates the diagramming, the paradigm-shifting, the thinking-outside-the-box-ing that will eventually save our children.

The cynical media will say that the Summit is little more than addiction to process. They will say it lifts the onus of responsibility off the individual. (Why were many able-bodied Germantown residents sitting on their stoops while the volunteers cleaned up their houses?) They will say misapplied volunteerism and philanthropy replace the Nanny State with the Nanny Civil Society. And they will say the Summit champions cliché as epiphany, in language pinched from the irritating patois of New Age thinking, airport-paperback Babbittry, thick-stocking'd social workers, and third-sector gasbags who preface every utterance with the words "civic" or "civil." It is the language, they would say, of a guidance counselor crafting a resumé for a graduate of a third-tier secretarial school.

Kevin Chadwick

But then, the cynical media are so . . . cynical.

They don't know what it's all about. They are too linear, and don't know how to "empower" themselves by "making creative use of existing resources" in order to find "shared solutions." They probably haven't even been on the Web, to the Digital Neighborhood Summary Action Plans, where community by community, the participating Summit delegations have listed their "specific measurable results," their "community vision," and their plan to "mobilize new human, financial or other resources."

Chicago, for instance, will "remove the visible and invisible barriers" that "limit human potential," with its "unique Chicago perspective: that all of our children are at risk if one of our children is at risk." Good thinking, Chicago!

Gary, Indiana, sees a "win-win situation" with major rescue efforts like taking out a "billboard advertising (the) Summit's goals and objectives."

New Orleans will develop "a coordinated, cooperative effort with sustainable achievable outcomes."

San Juan is going to identify its needs through "joint planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation . . . [to] provide a supporting structure." And, oh, it will also "allocate resources."

Albuquerque will save at-risk youth by "celebrating diversity" and pushing for "a bigger library," because—and this is kind of what the Summit is all about—"empowerment is a key word."

The specifics, of course, have yet to be decided. But there is plenty of work to be done in the interim, saving children, planning the next summit, and beautifying communities, as the volunteers did Dave's.

I met Dave when I went back to Germantown Avenue the day after the clean-up effort to see what the volunteers had wrought. Dave was sitting on a stack of tires, tracing his finger through the cornrows of his hair while chainsmoking Newports in front of his shop. Baby's Tire Shop, specifically. I didn't know its name until he told me, because Dave said the volunteers had painted clean over his sign.

I asked him what he thought of the volunteers' work, seeing that there was much improvement, even though the trash had already begun gathering again in wind drifts against vacant storefronts.

"You want my real opinion?" he asked, cracking a hesitant smile as he blew Newport smoke out his nostrils. "It was a pretty sloppy-ass job. They painted over my address, there's paint all over the sidewalk, they didn't get high enough to cover all of the graffiti—and it's still showing through. Donate the paint to me—I would've done a better job. I hope they didn't get paid for this shit."

"No, Dave," I said. Tragically, he had been gotten to by the cynical media. Dave's attitude was *not* what the Summit was all about. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FREE SPEECH AND THE NET

The Communications Decency Act Is an Ineffective Mess. But the Supreme Court Should Uphold It.

By David Gelernter

The Communications Decency Act of 1996 is an attempt to keep children away from "indecency" on the Internet and the World Wide Web. Its constitutionality has been challenged. The Supreme Court listened to arguments in March (the Clinton administration defended the law) and will announce a decision before the summer. There are good reasons to be against the act, but, on balance, there are stronger reasons to be for it. Both sides have made their positions as clear as mud, and it is hard not to suspect that the act's opponents have tried to mislead the public on purpose.

The act has to do with Web sites and the Internet. A Web site is a sort of special-purpose cable-TV station. In both cases, you need a receiver (a TV or a computer), and program material is pumped in over wires. To watch a TV program or visit a Web site, you punch in a code (a number for a TV station, some letters for a Web site) and hope for the best. The government claims certain rights to regulate Web sites based on its acknowledged right to regulate TV programs; opponents insist that the analogy is wrong. The *New York Times* put it this way in an editorial (the *Times* has come out against the act): "While children can come upon explicit material simply by turning on a television, computer users must actively search out the material they want to see." This is nonsense. Televisions and computers need to be turned on and told what to do, and in each case the process is simple. Like many people, I usually have a Web browser running on my computer at work; you could mosey up to my machine and call up a Web site from my "hot list" at the cost of one mouse click. (Your "hot list" includes Web sites you visit often. You can put any site you choose on the list.) Even so, if a child found himself in the tough position of having to specify an entire Web site explicitly, with no hot list to guide him, that would be roughly as burdensome as typing his name.

There are other similarities between the Web and cable. Some cable channels and Web sites carry advertising, some don't; surfing is popular in both cases. In their current forms, the Web and TV are by no means the same: The Web is better for shopping, because you can talk to (and not just hear from) a Web site; TV is better for video and the Web for words; it's much easier to set up shop as a Web site than a TV station, and so on. For the record, all these differences are artifacts of a bygone technological age and in time will disappear. A network of wires that are high-capacity (like cable TV) and bi-directional (like phone lines) and designed for digital traffic exclusively—digital TV, digital Web sites, it makes no difference—is on the way.

The act that was passed last year applied to "obscenity" and "indecency." It is generally conceded that the First Amendment doesn't cover obscenity, and the obscenity provisions of the act weren't challenged. But last summer federal courts in Manhattan and Philadelphia held that the "indecency" provisions were unconstitutional and ordered that they not be enforced.

If your Web site is "indecent," the act requires that you take steps to keep out children under 18. If you don't, you can be fined and sent to prison. If you do and children slip in anyway, you are in the clear. "Reasonable steps" means a software security gate that requires potential visitors to prove their adulthood and turns them away if they can't. To prove adulthood you type in a private ID number, which you get for a few dollars from a mail-order certification service. (The *Times* denounces the act as "government censorship," but you can only wonder what kind of bozo definition of "censorship" they are using. Probably one that is understood only on the West Side of Manhattan. As far as the act is concerned you can make your Web site as indecent as you like, so long as you make an attempt to keep children out.)

The act has three big problems.

1. *It won't work.* American laws are binding on American Web sites, but the Web is international, and it is no harder to tune in a foreign site than an American one. The idea that a locale with the old-fashioned moral standards of Holland or the fresh, clean air and health-giving fjords of Scandinavia might harbor

Contributing editor David Gelernter is professor of computer science at Yale University and adjunct fellow at the Manhattan Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pornographic Web sites may seem far-fetched, and yet it's true. Justice Kennedy opined during the hearing that the Web's global reach wasn't an issue, because "if the United States has a public policy, it can lead the way, and maybe the rest of the world will follow." Presumably he was kidding. If not, you can only sigh and note that Holland and Scandinavia don't seem terribly interested in following our cultural lead on pornography-and-society type issues right at the moment. You could argue that the bill is likely to be helpful to parents of porn-crazed kids who are also xenophobic, but the practical benefits don't go much beyond that.

2. ***The only way to make a culture that is good for children is to make one that is good for adults.*** The act is bad insofar as it holds out false hope. No one in his right mind would allow a child to roam the Internet unsupervised whether or not the act is upheld. Do you want your kids learning how to poison their best friends? Enjoying lesbo-pagan rants, radical-environmentalist apocalypses about the imminent death of the world, discussions about how and why to commit suicide? Whether or not such material corrupts children, it is almost guaranteed to upset and depress them. And by the way, there is no topic that is too depraved to pop up at a Web site or network bulletin board. Some people have the idea that when we talk about "objectionable material" on the Internet, we mean *Playboy* centerfolds. As the great Harold Ross used to say, dismiss it from your minds. Anyone can put anything on the Web. There is material on the Web and on network bulletin boards that is too revolting to describe.

3. ***What your children do is your responsibility, not the government's.*** Child-rearing is the business of parents. The government's job is to avoid putting up obstacles, not to lead parents by the hand. No topic makes us feel guiltier nowadays than children, for good reason: We have betrayed our children shamelessly. Our public schools are a failure; we know it and do nothing. The generation before ours thought it was perfectly reasonable for a mother to leave home and pursue a career, but we hold it to be the only virtuous course, and our scorn for homemakers who devote themselves to child-rearing is a tragedy and a disgrace. Our guilt is so acute we are liable to do nearly anything to quiet it, but papering things over with legislation is a bad strategy and won't work.

It seems to me, in short, that the Communications Decency Act won't accomplish much in practice, and from a certain standpoint might even be dangerous. And yet, had I been a member of Congress when it came up, I would have voted for it, and on balance we're better off with it than without it.

Why? The First Amendment guarantees free speech to every individual, but the community has a right to speak too. And yet, whenever the topic turns to society's moral structure, and the public clears its throat and tentatively offers an opinion, the *New York Times* tells it to shut up. This has been going on for a generation, during which time American culture has collapsed. No sane person claims that Congress is the unadulterated voice of the people, and the Communications Decency Act is no masterpiece of an utterance, but the community's voice comes through loud and clear if you listen—and the message is plain and right.

The community wants to tell its children: We'd like to shield you from the spirit-destroying coarseness of this culture we've created. We don't really know how, but we're trying. The community wants to tell the perpetrators of indecent Web sites: Do what you want, but keep away from our children. If you find this message insulting, good. (You can count on the fact that some of these "perpetrators" will be legitimate artists or thinkers who don't deserve to be insulted. But they'll survive.) The community wants to tell the computing industry and the techno-elite: We're not intimidated by your technology, and don't carry on like you own the joint. It may be that (as you say) the Internet is utterly new, global, democratizing, mesmerizing, the greatest single invention since the food court or possibly even the roofed-in shopping mall. But get this: Right is right and wrong is wrong—on the Web, and on Venus, and every other damned place, and don't you forget it.

So it's up to the Supreme Court. I'm not a lawyer and won't hold forth on the act's constitutionality; I will only note that the oral argument before the court in March was rich in exchanges that must have been thrilling to the practiced legal mind, but to the naked eye seemed basically like nonsense.

Justice Breyer asked Seth Waxman (the deputy solicitor general, who argued for the government) whether the act would make it illegal for teenagers to chat using computers about their "sexual experiences, real or imagined. . . . Do you suddenly make large numbers of high school students across the country guilty of a federal offense?" A reasonable question. Waxman answered yes, you might at that, but it was "a small price to pay" for keeping children away from "*Penthouse*, *Hustler*," and so on.

A crucial distinction has been plowed under: the distinction between the Web and e-mail. Teenagers can sex-talk one another to death using e-mail and the act couldn't care less. It prohibits the "display" of indecent material on an "interactive computer net-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

work." Electronic mail deals in private messages from the sender's computer to the receiver's. But if you set up an Internet "chatroom" where the public is invited to ruminate about sex online, then the act presumably *does* require you to keep teenagers out. The distinction is ancient and obvious: When people communicate privately the law rarely interferes, but when they open a restaurant, it's a different story. Public is one thing and private is another.

The same point seemed to get lost when Justice Kennedy asked Waxman whether it would be constitutional to prohibit adults from having indecent conversations on the street, where children might overhear. Waxman should have pointed out that the question is irrelevant: A private conversation may be overheard, and a private party may be crashed, and a private letter may be steamed open, but we can't hold the violated party to account for the consequences. When you chat with a friend on a public street or anywhere else, you are inviting the public to butt out, not listen in. Waxman answered, instead, that perhaps a city *could* prohibit adults from holding "patently offensive" conversations in public. Perhaps it could, but so what?

Whoever wins, the practical consequences won't be much. If the act is upheld, the adult-certification business will boom, indecent sites will shell out a modest sum for software gateways, adults will pay a couple of dollars to get certified, and that will be that. Civil libertarians worry about "chilling effects" on free speech when (for example) adults face up to the awful reality of having a fee for certification services show up on their credit-card statements. But I can set their minds at ease: Relatively few of these companies will be inspired to call themselves United Perverts of America or LuvPornCo Inc. (Announcing that some bill or other will have "a chilling effect on First Amendment rights" is the ACLU's way of telling Congress "not tonight, dear, I have a headache." It's not that there's anything really *wrong* with the bill, if you want to get technical, but it just somehow puts civil libertarians in a bad mood.) If the act is upheld, children could still be exposed to trash on the Net. If the act goes down, children will still be exposed to trash on the Net.

What it comes down to in the end is, which voice will carry the day? The public's anguished, even incoherent outcry over decency, or the intelligentsia's suave practiced spiel about how (to quote the *Times* editorial again) we should "honor free speech"? The public finds itself in the position of a mother telling her child, "I don't care what Jimmy's mother lets him do; in this house we don't use that kind of language." In some ways, it is a pointless stand. She has no illusions that she is sheltering the child, still less that she is changing the world. Whether her ruling will matter in the long run even to the kid himself, she doesn't know. What she does know is that her self-respect requires her to take this stand and that she owes it to her child, whether it works or not. ♦

Hearings Impaired: A Week on Capitol Hill

By David Brooks

Each day on Capitol Hill congressmen gather to ask questions they already know the answers to. They consider testimony on issues they've already decided upon. A lot of work goes into these congressional hearings—stacking the witnesses and preparing the testimony—but nobody seems exactly clear on what they are for. There is some element of political theater, but in 95 percent of the cases it's not particularly good theater, and nobody pays attention except the lobbyists who are paid to be there.

David Brooks is a senior editor of The Weekly Standard.

Drawn to the mysterious, I've spent the past week attending hearings, trying to figure out why they exist and hoping to get a sense of what the current Congress is up to.

Senate Appropriations Committee, Interior Subcommittee

ROOM 192, Dirksen Building

Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell is compulsively autobiographical, and his opening statement on federal arts funding begins with memories of his stu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dent days in Japan. The Japanese reward artists who have spent their entire lives working in a specific genre, like bonsai or pen and ink, he says. They name these codgers "Living Cultural Treasures" and give them a stipend for life. It occurs that Sen. Campbell should be named a Living Cultural Treasure and paid to roam the halls of the Senate evermore, with his ponytail and turquoise jewelry lending a little color to Republican ranks, and so continue to display his lifelong commitment to the art of the two-way compliment.

Campbell can pay someone a compliment in such a manner that it reflects as much glory on himself as it does the recipient. He's among those who've come to a Senate hearing to compliment Jane Alexander, the actress-turned-head of the National Endowment for the Arts. By the end of his statement we should have no doubt that we are in the presence of not just one but two discerning champions of art and culture.

Kevin Chadwick

Campbell holds up an Indian basket. This sort of Indian basket, the senator informs us, can be woven so tight that it can hold water. It can be woven so small that sometimes miniature baskets are displayed (thanks to NEA grants) on the head of a pin. Some of the craftsmen weave these tiny baskets from the hairs of ferns and from the chest feathers of hummingbirds. Campbell, now recalling his days as an art teacher, tells us that some of the craftsmen can no longer use certain materials because they are protected under the Endangered Species Act.

The audience shows no impulse to rampage down to the EPA to change the rules that prevent federally subsidized minuscule-basket weavers from ripping the chest feathers out of hummingbirds. Instead 10 senators flit in and out, dropping a little sweet nectar into Jane Alexander's ear. The subcommittee is chaired by Slade Gorton, who smiles beatifically over the proceedings, looking as Henry Fonda must have looked while caught in a rush of sweet nostalgia. He assures Alexander that while the barbarians in the House may have a debate over federal arts funding, over on the Senate side, art soothes the savage breast. The only sour note to be heard this morning will come from Campbell, in fact, who is offended by a "Dear Colleague" letter from House Republican Wally Herger. Herger's letter disparages federally funded basket weaving—"as if to imply basket weaving is not important," Campbell huffs.

Judd Gregg of New Hampshire and Robert Bennett of Utah look like the sort of senators who would want to cut arts funding. Looks can be deceiving. Gregg is a thin, sharp man whose face suggests fiscal austerity, but he too praises the NEA, as do the rest of the GOP hummingbirds.

A Democrat, Dale Bumpers, recalls his days as the governor of Arkansas, when he would visit the state penitentiary. (This was back in the days when Arkansas governors visited the pen voluntarily.) Bumpers notes that he "never ran across a murderer who played in the high school band or who had a role in the senior class play. That's as graphic and compelling an argument as I can think of for this program." And it's true that one rarely hears of a glockenspiel-related homicide or a serial killing by a cast member of *The Fantasticks*, although the link between NEA funding and the murder rate is one that has been little explored until now.

Bumpers's autobiographical musing bestirs Campbell, who matches it with his own. In the course of his rich life, Campbell was once a counselor in Folsom County Prison and judged an art show there. The quality of the art was remarkable, he reports. And so the gentle humming continues, with Alexander nodding peacefully. The senators weave flattery and counter-flattery into a tight basket that will hold next year's appropriation without losing a drop.

Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee, Subcommittee on Clean Air, Wetlands, Private Property and Nuclear Safety

ROOM 406, Dirksen Building

Some unfair critics of his may have called him an empty suit, but at the moment Sen. James Inhofe is an empty chair. Inhofe had just opened a hearing on some new EPA air-quality regulations when his beeper went off. He said he had to go to the Senate floor to vote, but he commanded us to go ahead and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

begin the hearing without him.

He had been the only senator in the room. We are now senatorless.

At first I think it might be like being in junior high when the teacher left the room. I ready my spitballs. I expect the lobbyist from the National Association of Manufacturers to start giving noogies to the lobbyist from the Environmental Defense Fund.

But the pressing issue of "particulate matter" is apparently too grave to allow for any horseplay. There are 14 witnesses, a dozen staffers, and about 250 lobbyists in the room, and as commanded, we go on with the hearing, even though there is no senator on hand to hear it.

The witness is the mayor of Dover, Ohio, and he has flown in to oppose the regulations. The mayor offers his testimony to the empty chair. "I'm pleased to be testifying before you . . . , " he says to the large leather-bound object behind the table. The chair does not respond. "I'd like to give you some background so you can understand how these regulations will affect us . . . , " the mayor says later on. The chair leans over to consult Inhofe's top aide, a 6-ft.-tall invisible rabbit named Harvey.

Great philosophical questions leap to mind. If a tree fell in a Senate hearing and there were no senators around to hear it, would it make a noise? The witness carries on, gamely trying to persuade the chair of the burdensome nature of these regulations. It has to be said that the chair is managing the hearings efficiently. If all congressional hearings were presided over by inanimate objects, they would be much shorter.

Finally the mayor of Dover, Ohio, concludes his testimony. The chair, committing a faux pas, does not thank him for his remarks. The next witness, a mayor from Vermont, begins his testimony: "Mr. Chairman, members of the committee . . . "

Senate Judiciary Committee

ROOM 226, Dirksen Building

He wasn't nominated while he was alive, and now that he's dead it is too late, but had Jerry Garcia been nominated for the Supreme Court, Senate Judiciary chairman Orrin Hatch would have greeted the nomination with an open mind. We learn this astounding fact at a hearing for a universally admired lawyer, Joel Klein, whom the president has nominated to head the antitrust division at the Justice Department.

The gentle hearings take a bizarre turn as Pat Leahy, the ranking minority member, is complaining about the number of judicial nominations that are stalled in the Senate. Suddenly he digresses. Let us review the transcript.

Leahy: I'd like to say that Sen. Hatch is a mighty fine songwriter. That doesn't have to do with what we're doing here today. I thought I'd say it. I'm a Grateful Dead fan myself and Sen. Hatch isn't.

Hatch: I wouldn't say that. I've never heard them.

Leahy: I invited you. I even said I'd buy you a tie-dyed shirt.

Hatch: I wore a Jerry Garcia tie yesterday and you didn't even notice. My tie today is swine influenza.

Leahy: I told Sen. Hatch that we'd be the only two people at the Grateful Dead with short hair. Him by choice and me by necessity. Now could you explain why you approved the Bell Atlantic-NYNEX merger without any conditions?

(For the benefit of readers, it should be noted that this final question was directed at Klein and was not made in reference to Jerry Garcia, songwriting, Hatch's tie collection, Leahy's male-pattern baldness, or any of the other topics that were touched upon in the Hatch-Leahy exchange.)

A number of observations need to be made about this colloquy. The first is that senators Hatch and Leahy behave like an old married couple, completing each other's sentences, teasing each other with familiar jokes, and even purposely treading on each other's raw spots. This is an instructive reminder of the sort of relationship that can develop between two senior committee members, and prompts the observation that committee chairmen are from Venus and ranking minority members are from Mars.

But the exchange also suggests that the subject of antitrust regulation does not really seize the imaginations of the senators who sit through long hearings on the subject. And when they get the chance, they are happy to break out and begin talking like human beings, even if abnormally self-obsessed ones.

Another strategy to combat Antitrust Attention Deficit Disorder (AADD) is the one employed by Sen. Strom Thurmond. Thurmond reads his questions from a script, so only his staff need pay attention to the proceedings, and there is no danger he will ad-lib, no matter what the answer to his question might be. If Thurmond were asked to guest host the *Tonight Show*, the proceedings would go like this:

Thurmond: Ladies and gentlemen, Woody Allen.

Allen: It's good to be here. I just arrived from New York.

Thurmond: Mr. Allen, have you ever been to New York?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ALLEN: Yes, I was born and raised there. I've lived there my whole life.

THURMOND: That's very nice. And where were you born, Mr. Allen?

ALLEN: New York, New York. I've just completed a new movie, which I shot there.

THURMOND: Have you ever made a movie, Mr. Allen?

Thurmond completes his questions with admirable surety of purpose and without a single detour or sign of nervousness, despite the outbreak of swine influenza that Hatch somewhat mysteriously says is occurring on his necktie.

House Judiciary Committee, Constitution Subcommittee

ROOM 2141, Rayburn Building

I love being around military people. In public, an officer in, say, the Marine Corps treats people like me with respect and irreproachable deference even though I know in his heart he regards us as soft, contemptible worms. It's nice to be treated as a superior by people who are actually superior to you.

When I walk in late to a House hearing on the Flag Protection Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, I find myself immediately surrounded by military folk. The hearing room is packed, and all the audience chairs are taken, so jammed around the back door is a score of veterans—men and women in their 50s, 60s, and 70s with blue VFW hats and hearing aids.

But there are plenty of seats open at the press table, so I squeeze past the old geezers and slide comfortably into my chair. From where I sit I have a nice view of the veterans shifting from foot to foot all around me, and especially the medals they are wearing on their hats that denote their combat service, or their time as prisoners of war, or even their having won the Congressional Medal of Honor. And this situation prompts the reflection: Boy, is this country screwed up when a veteran of a POW camp has to stand while some shlump with a magazine job gets to sit.

But I shouldn't be too surprised because this hearing is all about the veneration of a national symbol. There is one symbol in Washington that commands the awed respect of everyone. When it appears, every man and woman, and politicians most of all, snaps to attention. Public officials from the president on down gaze upon it with reverence. And as they walk the corridors of power in the course of their daily duties, they constantly remember that they owe it everything.

I'm talking, of course, about the television camera. Nobody needs to contemplate an amendment to the Constitution that would ban the desecration of the television camera, because nobody in this country would even think of insulting this national icon. I expect I will show up one day and a television camera will be hanging on the flagpole atop the Capitol building and senators will drop to one knee when the C-SPAN bus passes by. Even the veterans who have come to support the flag amendment tense up when the camera pans toward them and don an expression of imposing dignity. So perhaps it's fitting that I should sit while they stand, for as a member of the media, even of the lowly print variety, I am still a member of the tribe that wields the mighty camera.

Despite all odds, this hearing does feature shafts of high intelligence. I say despite the odds because the affair is adrape in sentiment. Of the mentions of Iwo Jima there can be no counting. A teacher has brought along her 27 fifth-graders (they get to sit down), and when it is her turn to testify she reads from her students' essays on what the flag means to them. I don't see why schoolteachers always feel compelled to flog their students' views, as if these half-formed regurgitations are somehow wisdom from the deepest philosophers in the universe.

But there is a superb exchange between Gary Ackerman, a roly-poly Democrat from Queens, and Henry Hyde, the avuncular Republican from Illinois. Ackerman, who opposes the amendment, says the flag is a national symbol and not a religious icon. Banning flag burning would limit exactly the sort of freedom the flag is meant to represent. He also raises practical objections: Would one be allowed to desecrate a picture of the flag? If somebody were to draw 52 stars on a sheet with 15 stripes, would they be able to desecrate that? Finally Ackerman argues that the amendment responds to no crisis. We shouldn't amend the Bill of Rights unless there is a clear and pressing need, he says.

Hyde acknowledges there is no rash of flag burnings around the country. But he says the country is nonetheless caught in a fractious cycle that has it divided along gender, race, and ethnic lines. He argues that the amendment is an attempt to bring divided Americans together and at least make a symbolic gesture in the name of civility and decency. A number of the veterans gently nod.

At one point I motion to one of the elderly veterans that he should take a seat at the press table he is standing next to. He looks at me pleasantly and declines. Maybe he doesn't want to sink to our level.

My faith in the American common man is restored. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

You deserve a factual look at...

The Israeli-Palestinian "Peace Process"

Are both parties doing their share?

It's now more than three years since that handshake on the White House lawn between the late Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat. This acknowledgment of the murderous PLO and its acceptance by Israel as a peace partner was an act of generosity unprecedented in the history of the world. Israel asked very little in return, except security and cessation of terror. How have the parties performed their respective obligations?

What are the facts?

Israel's Commitment to Peace. Israel committed to grant wide-ranging independence to the Palestinians. Israel has meticulously adhered to its commitments under the Agreement. It has, unfortunately, opened vistas and expectations among the Palestinians that will never be fulfilled. Those are primarily that an independent Palestinian state would be allowed to come into existence, that Jerusalem would be divided, that the eastern part of the city would become the capital of such a state, and that the "refugees" — people who left Israel almost fifty years ago — should be allowed to return.

Thus, while Israel has meticulously kept its commitments under the Agreement, the Palestinians have lost no opportunity to foment unrest and bloody demonstrations in response to imaginary "violations" on the part of Israel. The first and most notorious was the rioting in response to Israel's opening an entrance to an archaeological/tourist tunnel in Jerusalem. Another pretext for violence was the construction of "Jewish" housing within the city limits of Jerusalem.

No peace can possibly come about until . . . the Palestinians . . . comply fully with the Agreement and . . . realize that violence cannot take the place of negotiation.

Total Disregard by the Palestinians. How have the Palestinians performed under the Agreement? The answer is: very poorly. Their disregard for virtually all of its provisions has been so egregious that it amounts to a mockery. Despite repeated assurances that they would amend their infamous Charter, which unequivocally calls for the destruction of Israel, this has still not been done. They have taken insufficient measures to combat terrorist activity — in fact the Palestinian Authority (P.A.) continues to release well known members of terrorist groups. Even though the Agreement demands an end of incitement to violence, Yasser Arafat and his lieutenants consistently whip up their followers to "jihad" (holy war). As the bloody riots in connection with the tunnel opening and with the construction of housing units have shown, such incitements always fall on receptive ears. It was also agreed that the P.A. should have no authority in Jerusalem. Even so, the Palestinians maintain (and the Israelis have so far suffered them to maintain) official presence in Jerusalem, especially the notorious Orient House, to which foreign visitors and diplomats like to make pilgrimages. One of the most egregious violations of the Agreement is the size of the Palestinian "police" force, which is now estimated at over 50,000 (virtually all of them former PLO terrorists). Incomprehensibly, Israel (always accommodating) has provided this "police" with an arsenal of attack weapons, which at the first trumped-up occasion (the opening of that tunnel entrance) were turned and used with deadly effect against Israeli civilians and military.

The list of violations of the Agreement goes on and on. There is the failure to confiscate illegal arms; the arrest and interrogation of Israelis by the Palestinian police; the abuse of VIP privileges; the movements of Palestinian "police" outside the so-called "Area A" without prior permission; the unauthorized construction of Dahaniye Airport; the unauthorized construction of Gaza Port; the failure to enforce visitors' permit requirements; and much more.

The Palestinians and the rest of the Arabs threaten at every hitch in the "peace process" to break it off or to resort to bloody violence. Regrettably, the United Nations, which takes scant interest in the mayhem, mass murder, and genocide that goes on all over the world, takes a totally disproportionate and one-sided (consistently pro-Arab) interest in this "peace process" and in the alleged "violations" of it by Israel, without considering the almost total disregard of virtually all of its provisions by the Palestinians. No peace can possibly come about until the world forces the Palestinians to comply fully with the Agreement and until they realize that violence cannot take the place of negotiation.

This ad has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic about the Middle East
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational 501(c)(3) organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

Yes, I want to help the publication of these ads and in clarifying the situation in the Middle East. I include my tax-deductible contribution in the amount of
$_____ #57

❑ My contribution is in the amount of $75 or more. Please send me your 1-hr. videotape dealing with three important aspects of Israel's strategic situation.

My name is _____

I live at _____

In _____ State ____ Zip _____

Mail to : FLAME, P.O. Box 590359, San Francisco, CA 94159

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I Lost It at the Art House

A Moviegoer's Diary

By John Podhoretz

THURSDAY, APRIL 17. I just moved a block away from the premier art house in Washington, so I strolled over this evening to take in a late showing of a terrifically engaging little movie called *The Daytrippers*. It's about a Long Island family that drives into Manhattan for a day to track down the wayward husband of one of the family's two daughters, and writer-director Greg Mottola proves to have a real gift for finding unexpected drama in the most conventional situations. You end up disliking characters you found endearing at the beginning and admiring others who seemed like dull doormats at first.

The Daytrippers is very modest, like a one-act play or a *New Yorker* short story (the William Shawn *New Yorker*, not the Tina Brown *New Yorker*). Thus, there is something remarkable about the way it is settling in for a long run at Washington's Key Theatre and New York's Lincoln Plaza, among other leading art houses. When I was growing up in New York 30 years ago, this movie would never have been screened at an art house worthy of the name.

The very term "art house" used to mean a movie theater run by proprietors committed to the proposition that the cinema was an art form equal to literature or painting. The art house showed movies made outside the United States almost exclusively; its audience considered American movies far too bourgeois unless they were highly experimental (like *David Holzman's Diary*) or unabashedly Communist (like Herbert Biberman's *Salt of the Earth*).

Before the 1960s, art houses had a slightly disreputable, semi-pornographic reputation; in the days of Hollywood sexual censorship, a part of the foreign-film audience went to catch the occasional glimpse of a female's bare back, maybe the merest hint of a breast. But by the 1960s, the movies suddenly had a new cachet. The middlebrows who had once defiantly scorned the movies as inferior to the other "lively arts" (theater, ballet, opera, the symphony) decided that the cinema—they always called it cinema—was worthy of their attention. Art houses quickly became cultural institutions with real power.

The rise of the art house put moviegoers in a real bind. On the one hand, they no longer had to feel guilty about going to a movie rather than reading a book, wandering through a gallery, or spending an evening at the ballet, because cultivated people were *supposed* to go to the movies. This was like a dream come true to inveterate moviegoers, who had long desired admittance into the ranks of the culturally acceptable.

But there was a catch—the very same catch that always applies when middlebrow taste is involved. In the world of the middlebrow, art is like medicine. It is not supposed to be fun; it is supposed to be good for you, and the more punishingly severe the experience, the better. And so the movies you were supposed to see in the days when the cinema seemed like a high art form—the movies that made up the regular fare at the art houses—were joyless.

The world's most formidable filmmaker, the Samuel Beckett of the silver screen, was the Swedish writer-director Ingmar Bergman. His idea of a movie was to place Max von Sydow and Liv Ullman in a dark house on a barren landscape and have them stare at each other as a grandfather clock ticked away noisily on the soundtrack. Bergman made films about the existential struggle of man, which is to say, they were portentous nonsense. The same is true of the films of Michelangelo Antonioni, whose movies about the terminal boredom of swanky Eurotrash were actually the dull imaginings of a terminally boring Eurotrash director.

Meanwhile, in France, the nation Americans did not yet have enough sense to hate, Jean-Luc Godard was making movies full of editing and blather. In 1997, Godard's supposedly pathbreaking works resemble nothing so much as bad rock videos, only instead of featuring annoying grunge rock on the soundtrack, they feature incredibly annoying French conversations about Mao, capitalism, and the laughable Joan Crawford western called *Johnny Guitar*.

Now, it is certainly true that many wonderful movies were made outside the United States in the 1960s—the exuberant works of Federico Fellini still stand up, and so do the remarkably varied films by the Japanese director Akira Kurosawa. But for the most part, the movies that supposed-

John Podhoretz is deputy editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ly raised cinema to the level of art were almost psychotically humorless. Worse still, they were bereft of the very quality that brings people to a movie theater in the first place.

Moviegoers are not searching for Art. If they were, the experience of moviegoing would be torture, because it is rare actually to find yourself in proximity to Art. The same is true of people who go to the theater, or spend their weekends in museums. They go because they enjoy the experience itself, not because they seek improvement. Improvement is what church is for. Moviegoers spend their lives in the dark in search of pleasure—which is exactly what the middlebrows of the 1960s and the managers of the nation's art houses wished to deny them.

That has all changed now. Now that we are at the end of history, you are actually more likely to see a nice, sweet, unpretentious movie at an art house than at the local multiplex. Today's art-house audience has a real taste for the kind of fare that used to entertain Broadway audiences—amusing, well-observed stories about little people who don't count for a hill of beans in this crazy world. *Sling Blade* is an art-house movie. So is *Swingers*, the delightful look at young Angelenos. So is *Big Night*, the moving comedy about an Italian restaurant. So is *Waiting for Guffman*, the hilarious pseudo-documentary about a community theater in Missouri.

To be sure, the end-of-history art house is also full of noxious stuff like *Kids*, or the latest post-Tarantino gangster epic. But that doesn't matter; after all, even in the golden age of Hollywood, most movies were lousy. Have you tried to watch an obscure movie from the 1940s on American Movie Classics or Turner Classic Movies? Those movies are obscure for very good reason, let me tell you.

Sunday, April 20. Boosters of the new art-house movies—also called the "American independent filmmaking movement"—praise them because they do something Hollywood movies never do any more: They take chances.

This is certainly true, but a movie can take chances, even manage to take your breath away, without being any good. Take *Chasing Amy*. *Chasing Amy* is very interesting, but it's no fun. It's the kind of movie that's best in retrospect, that you enjoy discussing on the way home with a companion; alas, I attended the movie by myself at a small theater with a crowd so hip it was barely heterosexual. My fiancée was at her bridal shower, and I don't know what it says about our times that I took the occasion to see a movie about a lesbian who turns straight only to be mistreated by her new boyfriend, an experience that leads her to return to the homosexual life whence she came.

MOVIEGOERS SEEK ENJOYMENT, NOT IMPROVEMENT—THAT IS WHAT CHURCH IS FOR.

Though *Chasing Amy* is being sold by the marketing geniuses at Miramax as an honest, plainspoken love story for the '90s, this is one deeply sick film. It has a climax as head-shakingly bizarre in its way as the ending of *Clerks*, the 1994 debut film of the same New Jersey auteur, Kevin Smith. I found *Clerks* a tiresome look at anomic twentysomethings until its conclusion, in which Smith takes revenge on one of the female characters by contriving it so that she has sex with a dead body and goes stark-raving mad.

Chasing Amy at first is an awkward and badly written comedy about a dreamy comic-book artist who falls in love with a cute lesbian. The dreamy guy's romance upsets his oldest friend, a curmudgeon with a violent temper who does nothing but crack dyke jokes and scream the F-word. The dreamy guy screams the F-word back. When the dreamy guy and the lapsed lesbian fight, they scream the F-word at each other for about five minutes. Doubtless, Kevin Smith has saved the F-word as a macro on his computer keyboard (F1, perhaps?).

Then, just like *Clerks*, *Chasing Amy* comes to a shocking climax. The dreamy guy becomes obsessed with the fact that his girlfriend had a sexual experience with two guys in high school. He also becomes convinced that his best friend is unknowingly in love with him. And so he sits down his girlfriend and his best friend and proposes that they all go to bed together. A threesome will free him from his jealousy, and it will allow his best friend to come to grips with his homosexuality by having his first gay sex with the man he secretly loves.

The scene would be nowhere near as shocking as it is were it not for the sexy, muscular, starmaking performance of Ben Affleck as the dreamy guy; it is almost physically painful that so pornographic an idea could emerge from his heartthrob lips. It's a stunning, gasp-inducing climax, but it is entirely unbelievable—even if it did happen, as Smith's screenplay hints (there are all sorts of clues that Smith and the dreamy guy are the same person).

Monday, April 21. *Anaconda* is as far from the art house as you can possibly get—you need say no more than "*Jaws* meets *Jurassic Park* in the Amazon" to understand this movie about a really, really big snake that swallows people whole. I never would have seen it except that I was drawn to it for somewhat the same reason our middlebrow friends were drawn to the art houses 30 years ago. A form of reverse snobbery has

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

brought me out to the suburban multiplex in the pouring rain on the afternoon before the beginning of Passover: *Anaconda* has just spent its second weekend in the #1 position on the box-office charts. It has no stars, its director is a nobody, and the reviews are bad, so there's really no reason for it to be doing well except that moviegoers actually like it and are recommending it to others. Ah! The voice of the people! Perhaps there is something to be learned, some form of folk wisdom to be gleaned, from an exploration of the tastes of the multiplex viewer!

Actually, the impulse that compels my attendance at movies like *Anaconda* and the dreadful *Volcano* has a good deal in common with the forces that compelled the moviegoer of decades past to waste his time in art-house misery. Just as I felt obliged to see every Ingmar Bergman movie when it came out during my youth because the cultural commissars of the day told me I should, I feel obliged in 1997 to waste my time on the junk that receives the cultural imprimatur of the multiplex audience. In a populist age, the middlebrows have lost their power. That would have seemed like a wonderful development during the heyday of the art house, except that, here at the end of history, we are all lowbrows now. ♦

CHE GUEVARA REMEMBERED

The Life of a Glamorous, Gruesome Guerrilla

By Stephen Schwartz

Who was Ernesto "Che" Guevara? In the aftermath of his death, 30 years ago this year, his image was among the most famous in the world. It is hard to imagine that someone like, say, Hillary Rodham Clinton did not own a poster of Che in the late '60s and early '70s. His features were then the symbol of revolution, launching a thousand insurrections.

Jon Lee Anderson
Che Guevara:
A Revolutionary Life
Grove Press, 814 pp., $35

But today he is nearly forgotten, known primarily in his native Argentina and among a fringe of enthusiasts in the West. His evanescence illustrates many of the less understood aspects of the '60s Left, above all the ephemeral quality of the period and its protagonists. A new biography by Jon Lee Anderson, written with official support from the Castro dictatorship, in which Che played a major, early role, is clearly intended to revive interest in him.

Che, as an idol of youth, was more than a man—he seemed omnipresent, his impact permanent. Yet his entire career as a world-historical figure lasted no more than nine years, from 1959 to 1967, and his legacy, if it exists at all, is meager. His appeal grew out of the "anti-imperialism" directed against the democracies, particularly the United States. But the main thing to say about him is that he dripped charisma and physical magnetism. When he, Castro, and others in the Cuban revolution burst onto the scene, their primary attraction was their youth, their looks, and their sense of style. They had more in common with Elvis, Brando, and Kerouac than with Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky. Their challenge to established society was neither intellectual nor abstract, but hormonal—it was, in the Latin American tradition, macho.

The future revolutionary was born in 1928, conceived out of wedlock, his birth certificate correspondingly falsified. His parents had left Buenos Aires for the hinterland almost immediately after their marriage, to avoid gossip. As Anderson notes, ambiguities about Che's life would persist until the end: His death certificate, after his execution in Bolivia following his last, failed campaign, was also faked.

The Guevara family was not at all poor. Che's father worked in various enterprises, including construction contracting. Che, when he was 14 or 15, lost his virginity in a typical upper-middle-class way: with the servant of a friend. Though this was the era of Juan Perón and his hysterical wife Eva, the elder Guevaras were not Peronistas. They were standard Latin American leftists—anti-clerical, favorable to the Republicans during the Spanish civil war, and active in support of the Allies during World War II, when Perón and his cohort, melding traditional Argentine dislike of "British imperialism" with admiration for the fascist "new order," tilted the country toward the Axis.

By the time Che reached manhood, Brit-baiting was somewhat old hat among the Argentine young. Non-conformists like "Ernestito" gravitated toward Marxian socialism and regarded the United States as the enemy. Guevara acquired a ferocious case of Yanqui-hatred early on, and it never left him. While training to be a doctor, he traveled widely in South America and Central America, even as far as the United States. These trips allowed him to refine his socialist and revolutionary views, and they also led him into contacts with KGB agents that marked out a path he would always pursue: alliance with Moscow against Washington.

In 1954, the 26-year-old Guevara defended Guatemala's Soviet-influenced regime, fighting on the losing

Stephen Schwartz of the San Francisco Chronicle *writes often on Hispanic affairs.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

side. The next year he met Castro, the leading figure in a group of Cuban revolutionary adventurists he had encountered in Guatemala. From then on, Che was instrumental in the rise of Cuban communism and its projection as a global force. He became the world's best known theoretician of "guerrilla warfare," the forms of irregular or "low-intensity" combat that, in the past, had been viewed as little more than adjuncts to regular military operations. Guevara infused the term "guerrilla" with romance, providing an antidote to the isolation of radical movements.

In this early period, a serious propaganda effort was organized to present Castroism as precisely what it was not: a species of radicalism independent of, and even opposed to, the Soviet Union. The main significance of Anderson's book is its admission, supported by present Cuban authorities, that the Castro movement, Guevara included, entered the grip of Soviet intelligence long before the movement triumphed over the Batista dictatorship in 1959.

Nevertheless, we have been told repeatedly that Castro did not begin as a Communist but was pushed toward Moscow by an arrogant and obtuse President Eisenhower. Guevara and his comrades, the claim goes, were anything but Communists, but rather agrarian reformers, in the style of Mao and his comrades in the '40s, or nationalists in the mold of Nasser or Sukarno, or unorthodox demi-Marxists closer to Trotsky than to Stalin. (The same idiotic lies were purveyed in defense of the Sandinista party-state.) Anderson's book should end these illusions once and for all. Guevara had a longstanding relationship with a top Soviet operative named Nikolai Leonov—the kind of arrangement that puts him in the category of Alger Hiss and Julius Rosenberg rather than that of, for example, the Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata.

Chilling, too, is Anderson's account of the Castroites' gratuitous bloodletting, which began as soon as their insurrectionary movement became serious. Had this criminality been widely known in the '60s, it might have disgusted some of the young partisans who, around the world, flocked to Cuba's defense. Castro's brother Raúl was especially nasty, a sadist, as close observers of the regime have long known. Che (who had taken the Hippocratic oath as a physician) ordered killings on short notice and without reflection. He once wrote, "I am not Christ or a philanthropist . . . I am all the contrary of a Christ . . . Not only am I not moderate, I shall try not ever to be." Throughout the revolution, he demanded the execution of "spies" and "informers" as if ordering dinner. After the Castroites gained total control over the island, they killed countless of their adversaries in reprisals.

CHE WAS MORE USEFUL TO THE INTERNATIONAL LEFT AS A MARTYR THAN HE EVER WAS ALIVE.

Soon, Guevara grew restless. Like Castro, he was disappointed that the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 had not ended in nuclear conflict. Che was bored by administrative duties in Havana and remained beholden to the allure of a continuing world upheaval based on guerrilla methods. He commuted from one radical "front" to another, unsuccessful in fomenting revolutions in Argentina, Africa, and, finally, Bolivia. There, his band of terrorists made mistake after mistake, surrounded by Indian peasants who viewed them first with indifference and then with hostility. Che's group was eventually tracked down by the Bolivian army and wiped out; Che was executed in 1967.

When Castro announced this news to the world, some who knew the depth of rivalries within the Cuban regime wondered whether Che had not been deliberately sent to his death. An East German secret-police prospect, Tamara Bunke, who had lived in Argentina while being groomed for infiltration into the United States, was killed in his band. She became famous as "Comrade Tania, Che's woman in Bolivia." It could be that she and others, under instruction from Havana or Moscow, betrayed him.

In any event, Che was more useful to the international Left as a martyr than he had been alive. Posters of his sensitive-looking face and flowing hair blossomed on the walls of university dormitories and lecture halls from Paris to Pasadena. Few who worshiped him, as 1967 turned into the climactic year 1968, knew much about his real life or ideas. Few of his admirers, outside the top ranks of the Cuban and Russian state parties, knew the extent of his bloodlust and indifference to human feelings.

For some 15 years after his death, the cult of Guevara spurred thousands of young people, in Latin America and elsewhere in the Third World, as well as in Italy and other European countries, to take up arms in guerrilla adventures, usually manipulated from Moscow. But Guevara's tactics could not be exported from Cuba, where rural warfare was traditional. One after another, these attempted uprisings turned into massacres, with students and other naïfs sent heedlessly into battle against superior military forces.

Today, Latin America has recognized the futility of the guerrilla utopia and has moved far beyond the leftist dreams of the '60s and '70s. Masses from Mexico to Argentina now look to liberal democracy and the free market for solutions to their problems. The end of Guevara-ism was visible in Peru on April 22, when the hugely unpopular Tupac Amaru movement of narcoguerrillas saw its latest grab for global notoriety, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

seizure of hostages at the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima, crushed by President Alberto Fujimori.

Still, Che will not be forgotten entirely. The University of Buenos Aires has just announced a department of Che Guevara studies, which will analyze the future of "liberation" in Latin America. It would be nice for Latin America if Che's memory were to remain a quaint regional phenomenon, like devotion to the Peróns. Or the tango. ♦

ENOUGH EXCUSES

Walter Olson Gives the Right a Rallying Cry

By Roger Clegg

For those gloomy, post-Cold War souls who despair that traditionalists and libertarians, social and economic conservatives, and Main Street and Wall Street Republicans will never again be able to make common cause—despair no more. The central-planning threat is alive and well, regulating the American workplace to death, as Walter K. Olson demonstrates in his lively and well-documented new book, *The Excuse Factory*.

Walter K. Olson
The Excuse Factory:
How Today's Employment Laws Promote Mediocrity in the Workplace
Free Press, 384 pp., $25

Olson has written an account both thorough and entertaining, of drunken pilots, disgruntled and dangerous postal employees, and felonious job applicants—all apparently entitled to jobs for life under the current legal regime. It achieves true diversity in its villains: white males who have turned the Age Discrimination in Employment Act into a plaintiffs' bonanza, feminists who care little for the free market or the First Amendment, incompetent employees of every color, sex, and ancestry, and reptilian lawyers. *The Excuse Factory* also should be required reading for those inclined to blame the judiciary for all our woes, since it tells chilling tales not only of judicial activism, but of legislative overreaching and executive-branch tyranny.

Olson has page after page of can-you-top-this war stories. Worthy of special mention are those recounting the unabashed hypocrisy of all those who insist on applying laws to others that they cheerfully ignore themselves. Congress is the most famous example, of course, but my favorite vignette involves Ralph Nader. According to Olson, Nader frankly rejected efforts at the unionization of his employees since his groups, he said, "have a mission." When employees at the Nader-backed, small-circulation *Multinational Monitor* decided they wanted to bargain collectively, Nader responded with a ruthlessness that would have made John D. Rockefeller proud. "Before [the employees] knew what had hit them, the locks had been changed and Nader had transferred the operation's ownership to a new company that, as the *Washington Post* put it, 'chose not to continue their employment.'"

The Excuse Factory is similar in many respects to Richard A. Epstein's 1992 book, *Forbidden Grounds*. Olson's book is less theoretical and more anecdote-crammed than Epstein's, although *The Excuse Factory* has plenty of sound theory and hard data to back up its arguments. Both books explain why the country's antidiscrimination laws are confusing, counterproductive, and wrongheaded, and each concludes that we would be better off with a return to the old "employment at will" principle—that is, that either employer or employee can voluntarily end the employment relationship at any time for any reason, or for no reason. Indeed, Olson writes, "If allowed freedom to contract, both sides [employer and employee] have every reason to contract vigorously out of today's employment law."

One thing that *The Excuse Factory* is *not* is a screed against affirmative action—not that there would be anything wrong with such a screed, but Olson believes that conservatives have too readily overlooked the many other problems with antidiscrimination law by focusing too narrowly on the quota issue. And he is right.

Preferences are at issue with respect to basically three traits (race, ethnicity, and sex) in three areas (employment, university admissions, and government contracting). These are three very important traits in three very important areas, to be sure, but the scope of our antidiscrimination laws and the mischief they do is much broader. Current law covers many more traits (disability, age, sexual orientation, and so on) in many more areas (public accommodations, credit, housing, and so on). And even if we consider only race, ethnicity, and sex in the area of employment, there are many more issues than affirmative action, as Olson documents: harassment, accommodations for disabilities, outrageous jury awards, and permissible and impermissible testing of applicants, to name just a few.

These regulations have every characteristic that drives the private sec-

Roger Clegg is general counsel of the Center for Equal Opportunity.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tor crazy. They are so complicated as to be simply incoherent, are loaded with both direct and indirect costs, and affect both large and small companies in every sector of the economy. Yet the private sector's response basically has been, Thank you, sir, may I have another?—particularly in comparison with its loud protests over the excesses of, say, OSHA and EPA.

Olson's book teaches another lesson of great political importance now to the Right: that there are many social and economic issues on which broad agreement ought to be possible. What Frank Meyer said forty years ago is still true today. Shrink government, especially the federal government, and you will make both libertarians and traditionalists happy. And, conversely, if the government grows, it will likely make both libertarians and traditionalists miserable.

Take, for example, the issue of gay rights. A leading item on the gay agenda is the enactment of a federal statute banning employment discrimination against homosexuals. Such a statute fell just one vote shy of passing the Senate last year. To any true libertarian, such a law is highly objectionable, for all the reasons *The Excuse Factory* teaches. And it is objectionable to traditionalists, too, of course. Won't it make it harder to teach one's children that homosexuality is a sin when the government is punishing people who say so and refuse to hire them? President Clinton recently reendorsed this bill, and it will be interesting to see whether Republicans of any kind mount a principled attack on it—or avoid any criticism lest they be labeled homophobes.

Unfortunately, the latter is a real possibility. Republicans may laugh at political correctness, but nobody wants to find himself on the wrong side of the barricades when any serious name-calling starts. That makes principled opposition to any anti-discrimination laws particularly difficult. And libertarians are already vulnerable to claims of being out of touch with the real world, traditionalists to charges of reaction and prejudice, and green-eyeshade conservatives to accusations of hardheartedness.

Maybe *The Excuse Factory* will help give all those on the Right—and a lot of people not on the Right, too—the strength to come together and say that enough is enough. It is increasingly clear that our civil-rights activists and regulatory bureaucrats are today's central planners. And central planning is bad for the economy, bad for liberty, bad for the spirit. Bad, in the not-so-long run, for us all. ♦

MODERNIST SNOB

Ada Louise Huxtable Lets America Have It

By Steven Lagerfeld

During nearly 20 years as the architecture critic of the *New York Times*, Ada Louise Huxtable policed the world of building design with incisive and crisply composed criticism. It's not hard to see what the powers-that-be at the *Times* were thinking when they made her the nation's first regular newspaper architecture critic in 1963. Modernism in architecture was at its peak, and the Manhattan skyline was filling out with soaring steel and glass towers. The modernists didn't stop with the promise of new and better buildings; they were also going to reengineer the ghetto and reshape the city itself. It was a heady time. Huxtable had high standards and she wrote with assurance and verve. People listened. She became a leading voice of the architectural establishment.

Ada Louise Huxtable
The Unreal America:
Architecture and Illusion
New Press, 188 pp., $30

We are still living with the hangover of this era. So where did modern architecture go wrong? At the beginning, some of its present-day critics would say. Huxtable herself long ago recognized some of the movement's excesses, using her perch at the *Times* to help save some of New York's historic buildings from the wrecker's ball. But in her new book, *The Unreal America*, she spends very little time revisiting or defending the movement she once championed. Now the past is dismissed with a wave, as she almost offhandedly concedes that modernism's "tortured and exhausted principles" led to "dismal failures" in its later years.

In fact, Huxtable remains as committed to many of the old precepts as ever. A few elements of dogma have changed. Architects are now allowed to make sparing use of tools that were once forbidden—color, ornament, and historical allusion—but these things are to be treated like very dangerous controlled substances. If stuff like this gets into the wrong hands, Huxtable seems to say, awful things can happen.

It is easy enough to make this point, as she does, by throwing in some ludicrous products of early postmodernism, such as Philip Johnson's Gothic-topped tower for PPG Industries in Pittsburgh. But the

Steven Lagerfeld is deputy editor of the Wilson Quarterly.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

problem is knottier than that. Like the other arts—like America itself—architecture is returning to the past in search of renewal. There is an understandable hunger for the familiar, the recognizable, and the meaningful. Huxtable sees this trend in architecture as a terrible danger, a symptom of a larger national penchant for creating a sentimentalized and sanitized past. The entire first half of her new book is an attempt to make the case that Americans are hopelessly addicted to unreality, but much of the discriminating judgment that distinguishes her work as an architectural writer deserts her when she turns culture critic. When she sees America she simply sees red—or, more precisely, she sees a nation living in a fantasy land epitomized by Colonial Williamsburg, Las Vegas, and Disney World.

Colonial Williamsburg, with its attempt to reproduce a community as it existed about 1770, she says, is guilty of "linguistic and conceptual crimes against art and history." It is nothing but a fake, it cheapens the past, and it "has led to the denial of the diversity and eloquence of change and continuity."

Of course, the evolving, lived-in city is superior to the city under glass, but isn't there any room at all for a Williamsburg, a mere speck of earth at 173 acres, amid Huxtable's prized diversity? Is it really true that "authentic reproductions" devalue the real? Have the lines at the Impressionist exhibits shrunk since Renoir prints were plastered onto every desk calendar in creation? Isn't it possible that places like Williamsburg may even give us a *better* understanding of reality? Isn't it possible, for example, that people sitting in the reconstructed House of Burgesses amid all the emblems of the era's established authority get a much sharper sense of the awesome choice Virginia made when it opted for independence in 1776?

Huxtable isn't really interested in thinking seriously about such questions. Instead she marches out jargon and intellectual shock troops—Jean Baudrillard and Umberto Eco get many footnotes—to do her work. The Disney empire, already beat up by a legion of academic critics and aspiring Ph.D.'s, gets another thorough pummeling here. Much is made of supposedly disturbing revelations, such as the fact that Disney uses tunnels to keep trash removal and other unpleasant "realities" out of sight. Americans are so taken in by all the razzle dazzle of their shopping malls and theme parks, Huxtable says, that they no longer know what's what. They can't face the truth. They even prefer illusion to reality. What truths? What reality? She never says. What's the evidence that most Americans are, in effect, mentally ill? Apparently, it's obvious to people of good taste.

ISN'T THERE ANY ROOM FOR WILLIAMSBURG'S MERE 173 ACRES AMID HUXTABLE'S PRIZED DIVERSITY?

The "unreal" America is big and diverse enough to embrace (and pay for) the kinds of buildings Huxtable favors. Her own reality is a much smaller world, where the line between high culture and the rest is firmly drawn. A lot is left out. The country that invented the Broadway musical and Hollywood, that believes in make-believe, is not to resort to whimsy in its buildings. Homebuyers who are flocking to suburban New Urbanist developments (designed according to pre-World War II town-planning principles) out of a hunger for vital neighborhood communities are to be condemned. They are only wallowing in empty nostalgia.

Describing the appeal of places like Colonial Williamsburg, John Cheever wrote that the images are "not picked for their charm or their claim to a past; [but] because we are a homeless people looking at nightfall for a window in which a lamp burns, and an interior warmed by an open fire, where we will be fed and understood and loved . . ." Here is an interesting observation, and it might have helped Ms. Huxtable build a stronger case if she had given it some thought. Instead, she merely quotes it in passing as she rushes on to more indictments. There are a number of other asides—on the debilitating political effects of erecting public buildings designed on the cheap, on the new emphasis on interior public spaces in architecture—that hold far more promise than her assault on "the unreal America."

At times, her cultural criticism degenerates into mere snobbery. Her contempt for "sneakered and T-shirted" Middle America leads her not just to criticize it for denying reality but to suggest that Middle America itself is unreal. Little wonder that Huxtable is so concerned to keep the design of buildings in a few carefully selected hands. In the best tradition of critical writing, she makes a passionate case for her handful of favorites, among whom Frank Gehry and Rem Koolhaas are probably most familiar to Americans. As she says, architecture has moved beyond strict modernism and postmodernism into a general eclecticism, and these few, in her view, are leading a revolution.

She's not contemplating a revolt of the masses, however, because a lot of the work she cites is austere and frankly esoteric. It is hard, for example, to kindle a lot of warm feelings for a building hailed for its arrangement of "solids and voids in a style of reductive simplicity." Huxtable's buildings look different, but they have some important things in common. They are not the sorts of building you would want to take home to meet Mom and Dad. Each aspires to be a solo masterpiece of artistic expression; none resides comfortably

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on a block with other buildings. Most of them are also "difficult," Huxtable allows, and while they include allusions to past forms and to history, most passersby would need a cram course to understand them.

This is the modernist faith in full force: the architect as seer and high priest. After nearly a century's experience with this faith, it is surprising to hear it voiced with so little humility, or even at all, especially in architecture, where the mistakes can't simply be taken off the wall and whisked into the attic. Huxtable often returns to the notion that architecture is a social art, but in the end what she seems to mean is that we have a social obligation to submit to the grand designs of heroic artist-architects.

A social art by definition is bigger than the sum of its practitioners' aspirations. It certainly cannot succeed when it holds the society it springs from in contempt. If we are going to find new ways of making buildings that educate, inspire, and please us, we will need a more generous vision than what is offered in *The Unreal America*. ♦

MURRAY PERAHIA OVERHEATS

A Pianist's Disappointing Return to the Stage

By Jay Nordlinger

Piano recitals aren't normally big deals, but the one at Carnegie Hall on April 5 was different: Murray Perahia was back. He had been absent from the concert stage for most of the '90s, nursing an injury to his hand (caused by a mere paper cut, which led to an infection and bone spur).

Perahia is 50 years old and ought to have another 25 years of concerts left in him. He has been regarded as an important, mature pianist since he was 25, when he won the Leeds competition in England. He was not a showhorse, no Artur Rubinstein or Vladimir Horowitz; instead, he presented the music with humility, faithfulness, and reverence. He was often described as a "priest" or "poet-priest" of the piano, approaching each piece as its servant, rather than using it as a plaything or vehicle. Little personality or individual emotion was involved. He was a stickler for correctness, the kind of pianist every composer would wish to play his music, the kind of performer the pure-minded teachers would encourage their students to hear and emulate.

And though he was no keyboard-eater, the mass of music fans recognized his rare musicality and bought his recordings in great numbers. Perahia was the first pianist in years to be signed up by CBS Masterworks (now Sony). He was particularly effective with Mozart and Schubert; his recordings of the complete Mozart concertos and the Schubert impromptus are bestsellers today and probably always will be. Perahia was an heir to a peculiar tradition exemplified by Myra Hess and Dinu Lipatti: the self-effacing musician whose spiritual aura inspires a cultish adoration.

And yet, he was unsatisfied. He wanted more—a big technique, a monster technique, a circus-freak technique, like, say, André Watts had. This type of physical prowess is unnecessary for the canonical repertory in which Perahia excelled, but it is required for the glitzier, flashier repertory, which he began to program and record. He played this music well—he had not lost his essential nature—but he was playing with increasing speed, volume, and theatricality, as though someone had whispered in his ear, "Don't be such a square, Murray—put your heart into it." What's more, he struck up an ominous friendship with Horowitz, in the older man's last years. Horowitz was a brilliant man, no less a musician than Perahia, but he was a supervirtuoso and eccentric, the kind of musician that Perahia had decidedly not been.

Then Perahia was laid up, leading to cruel speculation that his injury was punishment for (literal) overreaching. He fell into depression and intense self-examination. He brooded, agonized, and took stock. And when he reemerged last month, he was back to a more appropriate repertory—and yet he still played as though he believed he should be a grander, more passionate pianist.

Which is a crying shame. In his search for his own expressiveness, Perahia has become more ordinary. He began his recital at Carnegie with a Handel suite in E-major. The trick here is to balance Baroque harpsichord style with the capacities of the modern piano. Perahia opted for an extreme: a broad, romantic approach, outsized and over-pedaled. His Handel was fraught with muddles and affectations, which had never been part of his playing. The last movement—the well-loved "Harmonious Blacksmith" variations—sounded like Brahms by the end, and sloppy, bloated Brahms at that.

Next came Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, a stormy, histrionic work that benefits from the pianistic restraint that Perahia was famous for. But he blustered through the piece like a talented teenager carried away in improvisation. Much of the simplicity has been drained from Perahia's playing, its clarity and innocence.

Associate editor Jay Nordlinger last wrote for THE WEEKLY STANDARD *about Wagner's "Ring."*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Diminished, too, is his singing line, formerly limpid and pristine. He misses more notes now—and apparently not from lingering physical difficulties—and his playing seems strained. He is full of body movement as well, making large, almost cartoonish arm gestures and shaking his head near-constantly. These physical indulgences would not bear mentioning if they did not mirror an altered musical understanding. Perahia is markedly less modest than he was, more willing to place himself at the center of things.

The Schubert "little A-major" sonata—so called to distinguish it from a later, larger work in the same key—ought to be right up Perahia's alley. And, indeed, he played it commendably, but he marred his performance with some ill-judged strayings from the score. For example, he paused bizarrely before the top note of the opening phrase instead of playing it straightforwardly, as he once would have. The second movement went better, song-like and chaste, and the third movement was old Perahia, all elegant and aristocratic.

Unsettling as Perahia's recital was, it was not, as two-thirds of the Schubert proved, completely bereft of the qualities that made him a pianist's pianist. He can still ooze liquid from the keyboard, making the piano seem more a string instrument than a percussion one. When his legato is on, no pianist is creamier. And he still has a gift for allotting the proper weight to the notes, leaving nothing wrongly accented.

Maybe Perahia was traumatized by his exile from the piano. Maybe he is more vulnerable to experimentation than most seasoned musicians because he was never a *Wunderkind*—he started fully formed. Though many have tried, no pianist has ever succeeded at Horowitz imitation, including Horowitz himself at times, when he fell into self-caricature. Perahia as Perahia was—is—good enough. Great enough, in fact. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: **Susan "I Used to Be on Washington's Channel 7" King**
Assistant Secretary of Labor for Public Affairs
(But If You Have a Local TV Anchor Job in a Top Ten Market, She'd Be Very Interested)

Secretary Herman to Act in John Henry Case

In what newly sworn Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman called "an act of historical reparation," a complaint is being filed by the department against the C&O Railroad's successor corporation, the Chessie System, on behalf of John Henry, "a steel driving man."

Secretary Herman contended that Labor Department regulations and guidelines were violated in 1870 in the contest between a steam drill and Mr. Henry on the day before he died. His death was "almost surely a result of over-exertion on the job due to supervisory neglect or malfeasance," Secretary Herman said.

An inquiry by a department task force into the facts at the Big Bend Tunnel has established that Mr. Henry was coerced into the challenge with the then-high-tech device. "It is evident," Secretary Herman said, "that the C&O was engaged in a heartless downsizing of the labor force through introduction of steam-driven steel. The fact that John Henry won the contest is not germane. But the fact that Mr. Henry and his colleagues were primarily African-Americans has been ignored for too long."

Based on contemporary evidence, there can be no doubt that Mr. Henry was targeted in the C&O's importation of the steam drill. According to one deposition, "Cap'n says to John Henry, / 'Gonna bring me a steam drill 'round, / Gonna take dat steam drill out on de job, / Gonna whop dat steel on down, / Lawd, Lawd, gonna whop dat steel on down.'"

Secretary Herman said that the complaint on behalf of the late Mr. Henry is neither historically vindictive nor politically motivated. "It is," she said, "intended to assure proactive hindsight, if you will, and to make history congruent with current standards."

Her task force is also looking into the tragic 1928 accident on Virginia's White Oak Mountain and the death of the engineer, Casey Jones, who is reported to have been "found in the cab with his hand on the throttle, scalded to death by the steam." They expect to refer the Casey Jones case to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

--30--

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NATION'S LEADING MAGAZINE OF BLACK CONSERVATIVE OPINION...

Subscribe Now and SAVE!

ONE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION ONLY $29.95

Call 1-800-340-5454 To Subscribe

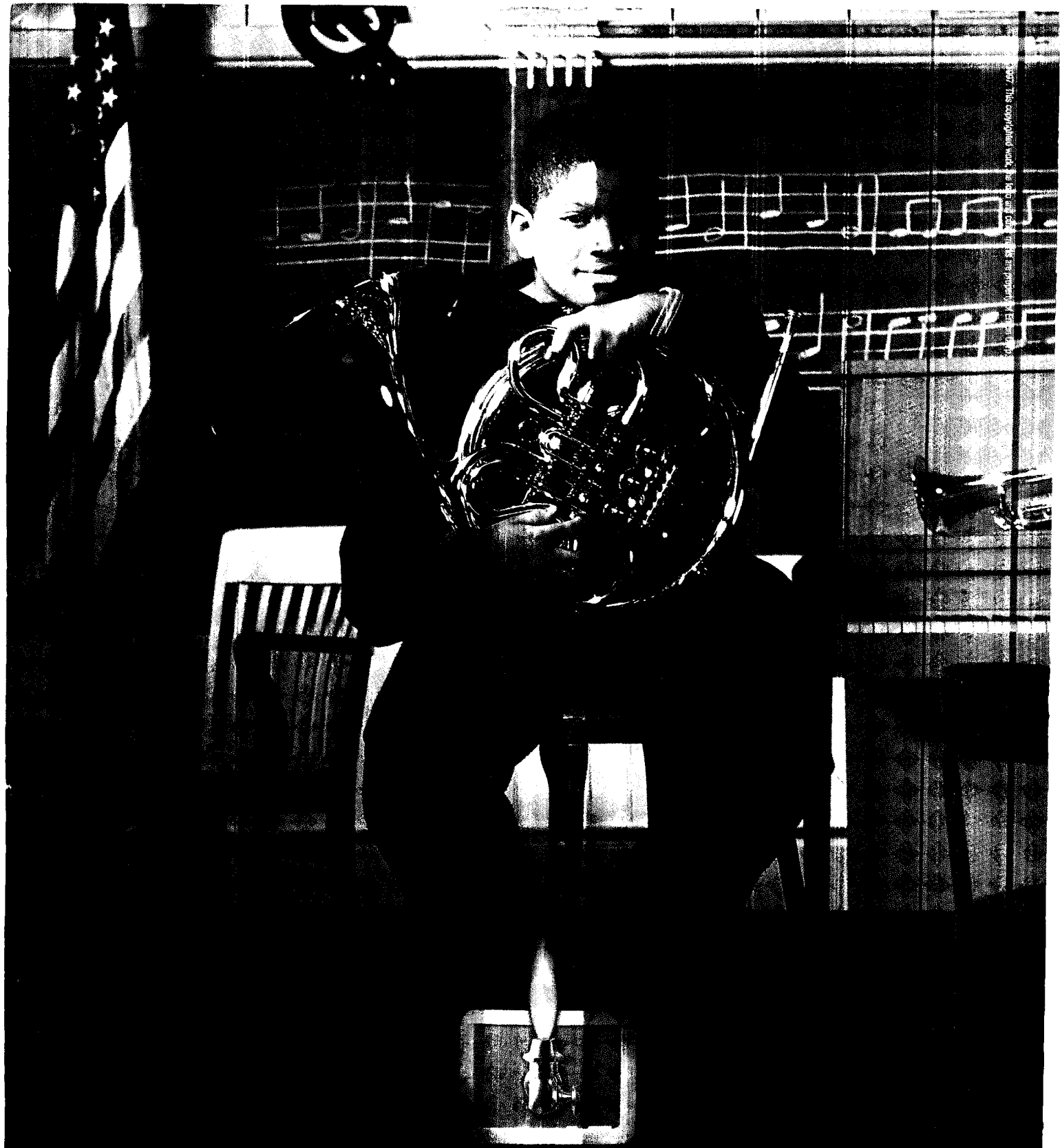
Headway

13555 Bammel N. Houston Rd., Suite 227 • Houston, TX 77066
281-444-4265 • Fax: 281-583-9534

Willie A. Richardson
Publisher

Gwen Daye Richardson
Editor

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



In their search for innovative ways to keep more funds in classrooms, the Columbus, Ohio public schools found a solution: Lower natural gas rates. After ten years of energy savings, we're keeping their students warm and three million dollars smarter. What's on your energy wish list? 1-888-55-ENRON, www.enron.com

Natural gas. Electricity. Endless possibilities.™ ENRON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED